

The Bergen News

Bringing Bergen Together

October 2022

Birds, Beasts and Botany in Bergen

by Bob Griebel

Western Jumping Mouse (*zapus princeps*)

Every autumn I run a small trap-line of six to eight mousetraps in our garage and several out-buildings, hoping to catch those interlopers moving indoors to avoid the winter weather. 99% of those caught are field mice (i.e. white-footed voles), house mice or deer mice. Occasionally however, the traps contain a surprise. Such was the case when (sadly) a short-tailed weasel ended up in a trap. On another occasion the trap contained an unusual mouse with long hind legs and a six-inch tail. A little investigative work proved it to be a Western Jumping Mouse. We have seven indigent mouse species in this province and the Western Jumper is one I hadn't previously encountered.

As their name suggests, these mice travel by hopping along like a kangaroo. If suddenly disturbed, their strong hind legs allow them to leap several feet in a single jump and up to a foot above ground. When not in escape mode, the jumps are a leisurely two to six inches. They are also champion swimmers, moving through water kicking their hind legs like a frog.

Western Jumping Mice are found throughout British Columbia, as well as in southern Alberta and southern Saskatchewan. Their range extends southward into the western United States as far as New Mexico. They are closely related to the Meadow Jumping Mouse (*zapus hudsonius*) which is found throughout Canada's boreal region including the forests of northern Alberta. Moreover, they are able to interbreed with the west coast Pacific Jumping Mouse and produce fertile offspring.

The Western variety lives in mountainous regions, preferring the damp terrain along streams or rivers in dense stands of alder, willow or aspen. The mice are nocturnal, coming out at night to forage on grass seeds, herbs and fungi. They are omnivores, however, and will prey on insects and small water creatures. In turn, the mice are preyed upon by all the usual suspects: skunks, weasels, foxes and birds of prey.

As can be seen in the photo, this species has a rather coarse pelt, unlike the fine fur of its relatives, perhaps an adaptation to facilitate its time in water. The coat is greyish-brown with a reddish tinge on either flank and white underparts. The unique five to six inch tail acts as a counter-balance when jumping and also helps the little creature zig zag when bounding.

Compared to the House Mouse which may have six to ten litters per year with an average of five babies per litter, the Western Jumper is much more constrained in its reproductive habits. These mice raise only one litter per year, delivering four to eight pups or "pinkies", as they are sometimes called, after a relatively short (16 day) gestation. As is the general rule in the mouse world, the young are born blind, deaf and naked. Development is rapid, however, and within a month the babies are fully furred, open-eyed, hopping and ready to be weaned.

Unlike most other mouse species these little creatures are true hibernators and, as such, live off their fat reserves while dormant for up to eight months through the winter. They lose approximately a quarter of their body weight during hibernation and awaken once ground temperatures reach eight to nine degrees C.

Western Jumping Mice, like their Meadow cousins, are loners and pacifists. They are solitary and never seen in pairs. On the other hand, they show no aggression towards each other and do not carry out territorial or mating spats. They are docile when handled by humans. Sounds like they have a thing or two to teach us.



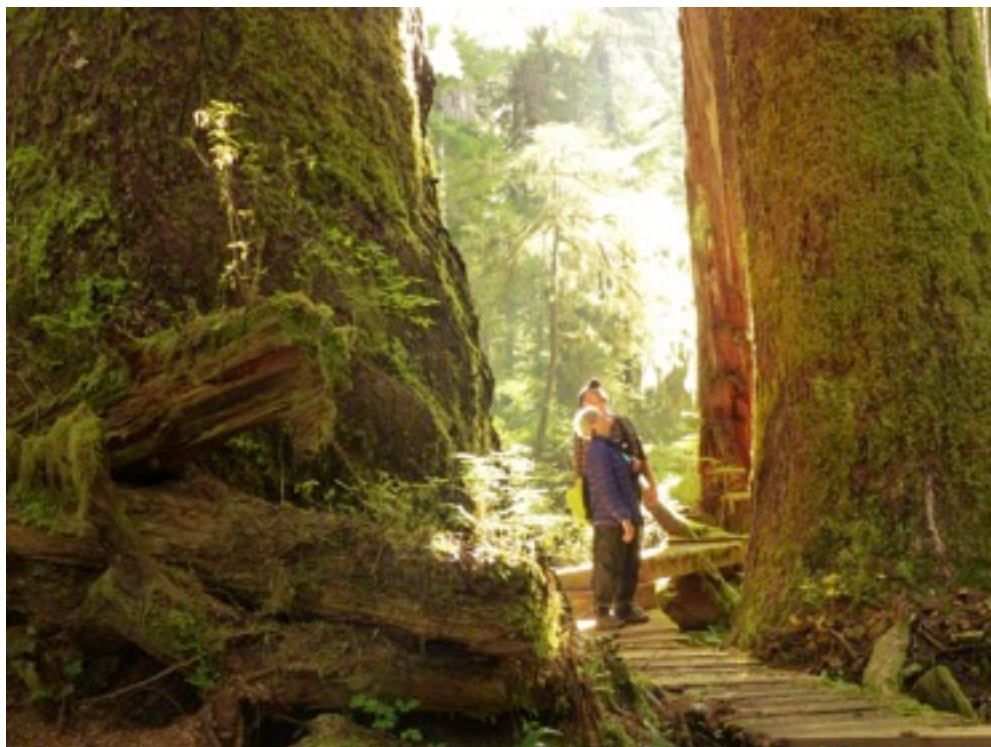
Photo by Will Richardson, sourced from Creative Commons.

A Walk on the Wild Side

by Sandy Easterbrook

I am walking in an old growth forest. Conifers spire upwards, seeming to spear the sky. At my feet lie recumbent bodies of their kin, interspersed with glossy fronds of ferns, furry moss, lichens, and armies of toadstools. Banana slugs, as long as my hand and patterned in grey and yellow, shrink from the shafts of sunlight that sift through tree branches dripping with Old Man's Beard.

It's not a dream, although my partner, Bob, and I have dreamt of this trip for a long time. We are in Carmanah Walbran Provincial Park on Vancouver Island. The park is located northwest of Port Renfrew, adjacent to Pacific Rim National Park, home of the famous West Coast Trail. As on the Trail, the going is normally rough and slippery but, in early October, as a birthday gift for Bob, we took advantage of the dry and warm conditions (BC has suffered from both heat and drought even worse than Alberta) to go hiking.



Our friends admiring some tall trees

We could never have found the Park by ourselves. The main entrance is down a series of unnamed, rock-strewn logging roads that zig and zag over hill and dale. Luckily we were accompanied by our travelling companion, Margaret from Saskatoon, and her son, Charles, who lives in Victoria and spends all his spare time hiking and fishing. His love of Carmanah is what inspired me to choose this location. BC Parks calls Carmanah "one of the most remarkable wild places on Vancouver Island," and the website for Spaces For Nature says it is "majestic, awe-inspiring, magical and intensely spiritual." The main reason for these superlatives is the trees—it contains some of the tallest and oldest conifers in the world. Species include western hemlock, yellow cedar, Douglas fir, Sitka spruce and amabilis fir. The BC Big Tree website, operated by the University of British Columbia, lists nine trees in the park 70 metres (229.6 feet) tall or higher, including the Carmanah Giant, a Sitka spruce 96 metres (315 feet) high. Some may not yet be discovered. Camped next to us were a group of young men from the Ancient Forest Alliance. An unusually tall tree had been spotted, so into the forest they went with maps, ropes, grappling hooks and video equipment. At the end of the day, they could report that the new-found spruce was 234 feet high with four spires—they had climbed to the very top to measure it!

Such giant trees are a timber company's dream. We can thank a man named Randy Stoltman for preventing the logging of the 41,000 acres which comprise the park. Stoltman was an outdoorsman who began compiling a list of tall trees at the age of 18. After exploring the Carmanah and Walbran River valleys, he announced he had discovered some massive ones. This attracted the attention of the lumber industry which tried to rapidly exploit these forests (75% of old growth forest on Vancouver Island has been logged). But citizen blockades and opposition led by Stoltman and the Western Canadian Wilderness Committee were so effective that the government decided to protect the land. The lower Carmanah valley gained park status in 1990, and the upper valley and Walbran valley were added in 1995. Sadly, Stoltman died in a skiing accident at age 36. There is a memorial for him in Carmanah at a grove which bears his name. His determination shows that one individual can indeed make a difference to the planet.

Continued on page 15

EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY

by Jessie

BONES



My topic today is one that is near and dear to my heart—not to mention my teeth. The word is BONES: big beefy juicy bones, moose bones, deer bones, pig bones, bones that are well-ripened and have a distinctive fragrance. I love ‘em all.

I have a dear friend who is a butcher and he cuts wild game for his friends. Just the other day he brought me a whole tub full of moose bones. What a treasure! Those guys are big honkers and when you get a moose bone you’ve really got something. Thank you, John!

Speaking of bones, I recently learned that there was once a TV show called “Bones.” It was about some kind of a detective who could study human bones and find out what had happened to the dead person.

Wow! She must have been smart. What fun to be *her* dog ! I’m sure I could have been a big help with those bones. “Only in your dreams, Jessie, only in your dreams,” said my person. “If you’re such an authority on bones how about picking up this whole graveyard of bones you’ve spread all across the backyard.”

Bummer!

Bergen wildlife
on the move,
as captured by
Pat Cummins’
trail camera



Acme

by Jamie Syer

acme: the highest point; something that represents perfection

When I was a kid, the Road Runner cartoons puzzled me. All those anvils, explosives, and intricate traps assembled by Wile E. Coyote—which always backfired spectacularly—why did they always come in a box printed with the name of my home town?

CPR surveyors knew the meaning of the word ‘acme.’ When the town was named in 1909, it was the highest (most northerly) point on the railway. Ten years ago, the current residents of Acme decided to showcase the name and the cartoon connection (without infringing any copyright laws), with what must be one of the wittiest “welcome to my town” signs in Alberta.

As with most of the small towns we’ve been visiting lately, downtown Acme is a much quieter place now than it was a few decades ago. Once the ubiquitous grain elevators are gone, followed by the railway itself, the emptiness along Main Street takes many years to fill.

These towns were created and then sustained by the railway for most of a century—but the railway was not the only common element among them. Another is their architecture, especially the banks, post office, telephone exchange and, of course, the railway depots themselves. Each of these featured a particular design, so that it’s still possible to determine a building’s original function, even if it’s been many years since it’s served that purpose. For instance, the Bank of Montreal, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, the Royal Bank—each had a template for their distinguished small town buildings. For other examples, look at the facade of the Olds Museum (Alberta Government Telephones), the brick Bank of Montreal building in Trochu, the CNR station in Beiseker.

The Bank of Montreal from early in Acme’s history is a modest wooden frame structure, yet designed to reflect the seriousness and probity of the institution it housed. It’s now the shop of an accomplished maker of bows and purveyor of string instruments: Bert Jackson. Only a few other old buildings survive. One relatively recent loss was the office of the *Acme Sentinel*, some of whose printing presses and type are now in Bergen.

For a community of about 700 people, today’s Acme has an impressive range of businesses and



Former Bank of Montreal

Continued on page 14

Musings: Fall

by Phyllis Cormack

It's October 9th. Thanksgiving Monday. Happy Thanksgiving to you all even though this greeting will be late. It's never too late to be thankful.

The gold and green of autumn remind me that there is cold weather coming. But isn't it beautiful now? A warm wind has come up causing periodic showers of gold to flutter to the ground. Fortunately, there are still quite a few green leaves on some of the poplar trees so they won't all disappear today.

Mom cooked at an oil well camp near Jasper many years ago. She told us that one fall the trees were laden with golden leaves. It was so beautiful. Then one day a big wind came up and blew them all off the trees, leaving behind exactly what we will soon have. Grey branches. So sad to lose that magnificent colour, however, it is the cycle that we see every year. Just the way God planned it. The trees need a rest and after the stress of dryness this summer, one wonders if they will be giving us many leaves next spring.

I've been out cutting down some of the perennials. I left the Shasta Daisies as they are still blooming. The sweet peas, miraculously, still have scent as there hasn't been a night cold enough to steal it away. My peonies must remain standing until a frost causes their leaves to turn brown or blackish. This sends the nutrients back to the roots. I wonder how long it will be before I can finish with the flower garden. It's been so nice and warm I don't want to complain, but the later in the season the the killing frost comes, the more likely I am to be out there battling with cold wind or snow. It wouldn't be the first time. It's so much nicer when we get a cold night then warmth the next day. Years ago we used to get snow early in September, then it would warm up and we'd have a lovely autumn like we're having now, except we haven't had the snow yet. Key word—yet. Patience. This lovely weather will draw to a close and one day we will be greeted with the white stuff. Until then we need to enjoy every moment we can of the glorious colours, fall fragrances, and warmth.

Editor's note: *Kate's first school Christmas concert was a howling success—with just enough mishaps to add to the general hilarity. Now it is time for Christmas holidays.*

Teacher

by Marilyn Halvorson

The concert and last day of school before holidays took place on December 21st, leaving four days to prepare for Christmas. I must admit that the first of those days I mostly spent sleeping. I hadn't realized how tired I was from the hectic pace of those last weeks of preparation for the concert until, at last, it was over. But by the 23rd I was back on the run again. My first job was to thoroughly clean my neglected bedroom. Mrs. Mac had very kindly invited Uncle Evan and Aunt Nettie to come for Christmas Day and stay overnight in my room if I was willing to sleep on the couch. Was I willing? I'd have slept in a snowbank to have my aunt and uncle here for Christmas!

I also pitched in and helped Mrs. Mac with the mountains of baking she was stockpiling for her family and Christmas guests. Then there were presents to wrap. I could have happily spent hundreds of dollars, such was my affection for many of the people of Lundhill. However, my entire lifesavings did not stretch to a hundred dollars so I had to rein in my generous impulses. Of course, Mr. and Mrs. Mac were high on the list. Mrs. Mac would receive two tortoiseshell side combs to help hold her bun of silvering hair in place. For Mr. Mac there would be a can of imported toffee to tickle his sweet tooth.

For my devout uncle, a book of meditations on the psalms, and for Aunt Nettie, a little brooch in the shape of a four-leaf clover. And, for all her wonderful help with my concert music, Ida Grayson would receive a brooch in the shape of a rearing paint horse.

Those were all taken care of early, but a surprise invitation had me off on a last minute trip to town when Mr. Mac hauled the can of cream in. Mrs. Arneson had sent a note inviting me to spend a real Norwegian Christmas Eve with their family. What to buy for everyone there? Five minutes in the general store and I knew what to give the children. There was every imaginable shape and colour of Christmas candy on display and I knew the Arnesons did not have the money to buy much of that sort of thing. I had the storekeeper fill a brimming bag for each little Arneson. For Mrs.

Continued on page 10

THE GHOSTS IN THE OLD MANSE

by Noreen Olson

The Legal Archives Society of Alberta was established to preserve and promote the history of law and society in Alberta. Toward this end they collect and preserve the records of judges, lawyers and legal organizations. The records are largely biographical and researchers, both local and international, use Legal Archives for books, theatre, films, biographies and genealogical research. In the years that our daughter was their Executive Director, one of her responsibilities was to arrange yearly promotional dinners in both Edmonton and Calgary. The dinners were meant to increase awareness of the Society within the legal profession and they were glittering affairs whose speakers had to be bright, funny and have knowledge of the Judicial System. In 2003 the speaker for the Calgary dinner was Judge Irvine Smith who lives near Glasgow, Scotland. Judge Smith arrived in Calgary on the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend and spoke to the dinner that evening. "Mom," Kirsten said over the phone, "He's a real sweetheart and I hate to just leave him alone in the hotel. Is it OK if I invite him for Thanksgiving dinner?"

Judge Smith was delightful, beautifully groomed, had lovely manners and was a born story teller. His home is on an island in the Firth of Clyde. His house was built in the 1600s during the time of Cromwell, and that's where the ghost story unfolds...

Judge Smith and his wife have three children. Each child began his or her life in a nursery near the parents' room, but at about the age of three, when the next baby needed the nursery, the three year old moved into a proper bedroom a bit further down the hall and in a part of the house that had once been the Manse. The first little girl had only been in her bedroom for a few days when she began talking about the ladies and gentlemen in "funny" clothes. She said that the ladies were in her room and the men were fighting outside her window. Some of them had big knives and sometimes they fell in a deep hole. This was about 1967, so the little girl was well aware of TV and movies and she was no more afraid of the ladies and gentlemen than she would have been by a TV show. Judge Smith knew that an ancient well had been outside the window but it had been filled in long ago and, until now, no one had suggested that it held anything but rocks and earth, so he had no plans to dig it out. As the child was not at all upset they downplayed the story and soon the next child, a boy, reached an age to move into the Manse rooms.

He had only been there for a few days when he became obsessed with swords. He loved swords. He wanted one of his own and, using whatever was at hand, he struck the proper pose and did a fair imitation of a swordsman. "This is what the men in funny clothes do," he told his parents. He was not frightened either and as no one else had reported ghosts in the Manse rooms, life went on.

The third child, a girl, was much more imaginative and sensitive than her siblings and she did not like her new bedroom. "There are men fighting," she told her mom. "They are cutting each other with swords, the ladies scream and a very bad man cut a lady on the leg and there was blood." They let her continue in the Nursery.

Soon after this the family had an outing to the Tower of London and, as they walked through the various exhibits, they came upon a display of armour from Cromwell's period, the Civil War of 1653-8. "Look Mommy," the littlest child called excitedly. "Here are the clothes that the bad man wore when he cut the lady's leg."

The judge invited us to visit them in Scotland. We didn't go but, if we had, I don't think we would have wanted a room in the old Manse.

Happy Halloween.

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.

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.

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.

Bergen Church services are every Sunday starting at 10:30 am. Pastor Rob Holland gives encouraging and Bible-based messages while adding a little humour.

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.

There is Sunday School for the kids and space is provided for little ones.

The first Sunday of each month we will be having refreshments after the service. This may be coffee and cookies or a potluck. Plans will be announced previous to the date.

Alanna Waines and Scott Anderson are taking care of our youth by organizing events on Friday evenings.

"The Den SYC" or Sundre Youth Center provides various activities for our youth between grades 7 – 12 who are looking for a place to "hang out" after school & evenings. There is a wide variety of activities planned which can be viewed by googling "The Den SYC" or on Facebook.

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. Call ahead so 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 Schwardzenberger 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, our church secretary, 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/>

Winter Walks in Bergen

Want to get more exercise? Meet neighbours? Lose weight maybe? Join the winter walks in Bergen, Friday mornings beginning November 4th at 10:00 a.m. We walk about four miles on a different road every week. If you get tired, you can return to your car at any time. For more information, call Sandy Easterbrook at 403-638-1283 or 638-1985. The schedule for upcoming walks is:

November 4	Pioneer Lodge Road and Range Road 50 going north
November 11	Pioneer Lodge Road and Range Road 50 going south
November 18	Pioneer Lodge Road and Range Road 52 going north
November 25	Pioneer Lodge Road and Range Road 52 going south
December 2	Pioneer Lodge Road and Range Road 54 going north

Bergen Ladies Aid Report

by Phyllis Cormack

We gathered on a beautiful fall day at Shelley Ingeveld's home for our first meeting after the summer break. Donelda Way opened our meeting with reading scripture followed by the Lord's Prayer.

Twelve ladies answered roll call reporting on their summer activities ranging from travel to visitors to general tasks around home. It was a gorgeous summer, albeit dry.

The minutes from our June meeting and our financial report were given by Betty Josephson and Maureen Worobetz respectively. Our correspondence consisted of one thank you card which was passed around. Shelley had delivered one other goodwill basket during the summer.

Cemetery clean-up day went very well. Hardly any cones to rake up; however after the tornado blew past, it stirred many more from the trees. Fortunately, that was the only damage it caused at the cemetery.

Several of us gathered at Coyote Creek at the end of July for a very enjoyable lunch and time visiting.

We reviewed our funeral lunch guidelines to update those taking the bookings.

Our group is volunteering at the Sundre Thrift Shop for the month of October. Since we work only on Fridays, it wasn't hard to get two ladies to volunteer for each of the four days.

After two years of not having our annual auction, we made plans for one this November 12th. Posters will be printed and distributed at our next meeting to be put up in various locations. Betty will look after getting an ad in the paper. Marilyn Halvorson will contact our previous auctioneer to ensure he is able to return. Other sale arrangements will be made at our next meeting at the end of October.

Shelley reported that the Sundre Hospital Gala is on November 19th at the Sundre Community Center. Tickets can be purchased on line and silent auction items can be left at Sundre Feed and Farm Supply. There will be a dance with Dustin Farr performing.

Our October meeting will be at Betty's home with Donna McGregor assisting her with lunch. Lynn Whittle will read scripture. We sang our theme song, *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, then enjoyed the lovely lunch provided by Marilyn and Shelley. A good time of conversing took place before everyone headed home.



The Bergen Farmers' Market Christmas Market on November 26th .

10:00 to 1:00

at the Bergen Hall.

A great opportunity to find unique Christmas gifts, and visit with friends while enjoying coffee, and live music.

Please Note New Rates for Subscription Renewals

To our loyal Bergen News subscribers: Please check your mail labels for your expiry date. You may mail your renewal to The Bergen News c/o Marilyn Walker Box 21, Site 9, RR 2, Sundre, T0M 1X0. Renewals by e-transfer can be sent to editor@thebergennews.ca Subscriptions are \$20 annually or \$15 for an email subscription. First time subscribers may use the same addresses to set up a subscription. For additional information call Marilyn at 403-638-2156. Thanks for your support.

Piecing Together History—Part One: The Quilt Craze

by Shari Peyerl

Like other aspects of material culture, quilts are functional objects, and also records of societal change. I'm mad about textile history and have discovered several engaging resources about quilts, including books, websites, and podcasts, which I'll share over the next few articles.

For an overview of the history of Albertan quilts, check out *Alberta Quiltmakers and Their Quilts*, by Lucie Heins, Acting Curator for the Daily Life & Leisure program at the Royal Alberta Museum (available for purchase at the Sundre and District Museum). This visually rich book, recently published by the Friends of Royal Alberta Museum Society, is based on Lucie's decade of study. The quilts featured in the book date from the 19th to 21st centuries and reflect a variety of styles.

Lucie states that the Crazy Quilt was the most popular quilt style Albertans made. You might think "crazy" refers to the hodgepodge of colours and shapes used in these quilts and their lack of a discernible pattern or repetition in the design. Actually, the name derives from the network of fine cracks (called *crazing*) on the surface of Japanese ceramics. The random shapes created by these cracks are mimicked by the fabric pieces with fancy stitches embroidered along their edges.

The 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition introduced people in western cultures to Asian art and stimulated an age of *Japonisme*. This French term describes the passion for Japanese art and design that developed in the West in the late 19th century. The fashion for East Asian art coincided with the social changes occurring in Victorian culture.

The development of the middle class in the Victorian era meant that increasing numbers of women were consigned to the role of homemaker, reliant on their husbands' earnings. Family status was marked by the number of servants employed in the home and by the demonstration of the wife's resultant leisure time. Women took up the creation of labour-intensive, non-functional objects. Time-consuming ornately embellished crazy quilts fit the bill perfectly.

You see, crazy quilts weren't actually quilts and their role was purely decorative. Quilts are comprised of several layers of fabric and *quilting* refers to the pattern of stitches that join together the top layer (frequently pieced), the insulating middle layer, and the backing layer. Quilts serve the practical purpose of providing warmth, and are typically used on a bed.

In contrast, crazy quilts are more accurately described as coverlets, since there is usually no thick middle layer, and more often than not there is no overall stitching linking the layers together. Rather than covering a bed, they were artistically draped over the parlour piano where they could be admired by visitors. Their expensive velvet and silk materials were embellished with delicate embroidery, resulting in a difficult to clean, impractical textile.

However, sensible North American pioneers found ways to adapt this aspirational quilt style to harsh realities. As described in the International Quilt Museum's (<https://www.internationalquiltmuseum.org>) detailed online exhibit, "The Crazy Quilt Story" <<https://worldquilts.quiltstudy.org/crazyquiltstory/about>>, a more organized crazy quilt style was favoured in the Americas. Random fabric pieces were sewn to fabric foundation squares, which could then be sewn together into larger designs.

With a shift from luxury fabrics to the scraps generated by practical sewing projects or salvaged from worn items, the crazy style became more functional. For impoverished women with even fewer resources and less leisure time, cheap preprinted material replicating the crazy patterns was eventually mass-manufactured. When the crazy quilt style was accessible to people of all classes, trend-setters shifted their desires to more expensive and exclusive items, and the cycle of fashion began again.

During the 1970s, the nostalgic return to handcrafts caused a quilting revival and patterns were published in women's periodicals. As I lay under my hideous, mustard and brown faux-pieced polyester bedspread, I dreamed of stitching one of the intricately embroidered, lush, jewel-toned crazy quilts depicted in Mom's magazines. I still hope to sew a crazy quilt, but will have to wait until I have more leisure time. Maybe I can convince my husband to take over all the household chores...

Teacher, continued from page 5

Arneson, I found a beautiful tin in which to store her delicious cookies. And for poor Mr. Arneson who grew more frail each day? After much searching, I found a small, brightly-colored blanket, just right to throw around his shoulders to keep out the chill when he sat up in bed.

And then there was Leif...

This one I *had* been anticipating. A month earlier he had shown me a photo of both his beautiful horses, posed, ears up, manes blowing in the wind. Somehow, I had managed to slip the picture up my sleeve when I left, and I took it to my resident artist, Tom Claymore. He painted a portrait so lifelike those horses almost whinnied. Tom could hardly believe it was true when I paid him five dollars for his work.

Now, framed and carefully wrapped in tissue paper, it was ready for Christmas Eve.

And so was I.

Before I knew it, Christmas Eve was here. As the early dusk descended, I was dressed in my warmest clothes and waiting for my “chariot” to arrive. Mrs. Mac chuckled as she watched me restlessly pacing the kitchen. “Settle down, girl. Ye’ll wear yourself out before he gets here.”

Before I could reply, I heard the sound I was listening for. Sleigh bells! “See you before Christmas!” I laughed, giving her a big hug and heading out the door in time to see Leif’s team and sleigh arrive in a flurry of thrown-up powder. He started to jump down to help me in but I beat him to it, setting my parcels behind the seat and hopping in on my own. This being courted was okay but I wasn’t about to turn into one of those helpless women—not even for Leif! He tucked the warm quilt around me and shifted the warm rock on the sleigh floor over to my feet. “You sure you’re going to be warm enough?” he asked. He turned the sleigh around and, skillfully handling the lines with one hand, he reached the other arm around my shoulders and held me closer. That felt pretty good but I wasn’t going to give him the satisfaction of letting him know it. Besides, now that they were turned toward home, the horses were feeling good and threatening to break into a gallop.

“Never mind about me,” I said with a fake scowl. “Get both hands on the lines before you end up dumping us in a snowbank.”

Continued on page 12

Sundre Seniors Socialize
Presented by Sundre United Church

Wednesdays, Nov. 9th and 23rd

Noon to 2:30 p.m.

Sundre United Church Hall

Luncheon, Community Resource Speaker, Entertainment

Sponsored by New Horizons for Seniors Program Grant

This is a free event for 55+ seniors. RSVP is essential however.

Pre-Registrations Only. Contact Joyce Wicks: 403.638.1950 Email: eawicks@airenet.com

Ride With Me

by Donelda Way

"There is a coyote. Did you see it?" We were passing the Erickson farm. The deciduous trees seemed to take on more and more fall colours as the miles went by.

Through a clinic window I watched a mother open the pickup truck door. The car seat *faced* her! She easily slipped her child into the car seat and securely buckled the child into it. Then she *swivelled* the car seat so it faced forward. I wish all parents had that style of car seat.

At Peters' Drive in Calgary: Pumpkin Spice Milkshake

In Calgary, 10th St. near SAIT: Our friends explained that the cranes and crews were installing massive concrete culverts to divert flood water runoff into the river.

Calgary: I learned – heavier vehicles have more wheel nuts

Licences: CME 4 PIE AD 2 CART DRK HORZ BUCKET SHYANNE

"Those two banks of clouds look awesome". They were parallel to the horizon one above the other. The clouds were straight along the bottom but extremely white and puffy on top.

Foothills Hospital: The first parkade was full all the way to the bottom tier. The enclosure seemed tight, dark, confusing and foreboding. The second parkade was full all the way to the top tier which was laced with open sunshine with plenty of empty spaces.

Northland Mall: The site of major construction. Mall entrances have been closed. The Food Court is no more. Parking in general is limited.

Twp. Rd 310: "That is one huge owl!" I exclaimed as we approached and passed by. The owl appeared to be an extension of the top of one of the larger fence posts.

Stoney Trail: "That's a stroller in the median. There's a yellow crate in its seat. Someone is collecting bottles using the stroller? Strange location for it."

Fallen Timber Trail: "The calf is out." By the time we pulled a U-turn, a lady had parked in the field entrance at the open gate. My husband herded the calf along the ditch until it veered through the opening, kicked up its hind hooves and literally high tailed it across the field. The gathered cows paid no attention. The gate was secured and we continued our travels.

Chestemere: We arrived early to pick up an item. During the wait I sat on the tailgate of our pickup. It dawned on me that it had been a long time since I had been in an urban residential setting. Everything was clean...the homes, the vehicles, the driveways. Everything was on view...from the many, many windows of surrounding homes. Everything was crowded. Only a few feet separated the adjacent lawns or the parked vehicles.

Elkton Rd: There was a gravel crusher in operation in the pit. We had passed it a few times. This is what those quick views gave my memory. The large loader was taking rocks from a nearby embankment. These various sized rocks were lowered into the separator unit which was attached to conveyor belts that speedily sent the rocks to meshes that further separated them onto another system of conveyor belts. The tallest conveyor belt was spilling its load onto the last of three impressive piles. Each pile had a ridge line across the top. Gravel trucks were coming and going—probably to the major road repair past the construction signs. We turned and proceed down the long hill to Hwy 22.

Elkton Rd: The construction signs were gone. We noticed that what had been a washed out gulley had been totally repaired, including new pavement and guard rails.

Hwy 27: The tanker truck did not wait. It pulled off a side road to get in front of us. I commented, "Thankfully, we know big trucks take a long time to gain speed. Once they do, you can't keep ahead of them". True to my comment, on a downhill, the tanker had to brake. He got going too fast. I was thankful we were following.

Walking to our vehicle we noticed the slight breeze had leaves falling gently to the ground. As we drove, the road was golden from this autumn decorating. The low lands had taken on the duller, browner tones of approaching winter.

Sundre: As a passenger in the vehicle crossing the bridge, I watched a man in the river fly casting. He appeared so sure of his fishing abilities.

Near Crossfield: My husband said with joy, "That was three pheasants!" I replied with excitement, "I saw their colours!"

Teacher, continued from page 10

“Hmm. Bossing me around already and we aren’t even married yet.”

“What do you mean, ‘yet’? Who said anything about getting married?”

He just shrugged and grinned—and took the lines in both hands.

The stars were just coming out when we pulled up to the Arneson’s door. “Now, Miss O’Rourke, if you will take your parcels into the house, I will look after the horses.” He paused and then added, very seriously, “or do you need help to get down?”

“Of course not,” I countered, jumping from the sleigh in what I thought was a very athletic manner. Too bad I landed on a patch of ice and pitched face first into my favourite snowbank.

There was total silence for a minute as I did my best to retrieve both myself and my dignity from the snow. Then Leif began to laugh.

“That wasn’t funny!” I sputtered, grabbing a handful of snow and throwing it at him, but by then I was laughing, too. I grabbed my parcels and headed for the house.

The first things I saw there were the children’s faces, pressed tight against the window, staring at me.

The door flew open. “Oh, Miss O’Rourke, did you fall in the snow?” asked one innocent little voice, followed closely by an even more innocent one, adding, “Again?”

Then they too broke into gales of laughter. I shook my head. None of the Arnesons would ever let me live down my first grand entrance when my horse dumped me in their yard. Mrs. Arneson appeared at the door, rosy-faced from bending over the steaming pots on her stove. “Children! Don’t keep Miss O’Rourke standing out there in the snowstorm.” The children and I all glanced up at the clear, starry sky. Then, straight-faced, Mrs. Arneson added, “Strange. All the snow seems to fallen on just you.” Then she too was laughing as she urged me into the warm, savoury-scented kitchen.

What a family to get mixed up with!

After much laughter and hugs all around, the children escorted me to the table where brimming bowls and loaded platters of food were soon set out. Leif burst in with a gust of cold air and, while his mother was turned away dishing up potatoes, slipped a pinch of snow down my neck. I gave an involuntary squawk and Mrs. Arneson swung around, potato masher in hand. “Leif! Behave yourself! You are not too big to be sent to the loft without your supper yet,” she threatened, but a smile was sneaking around the corners of her mouth.

“Sorry, Ma,” Leif said, not looking one bit sorry as he slid into the chair next to mine.

The children took their places around the table. Mrs. Arneson sat down and nodded to Leif. He looked around the table, waiting as everyone reached out to take the hand of the person next to them. Mrs. Arneson’s work-roughened hand grasped mine on the left. On the right Leif’s big warm hand enveloped mine in a grip that felt so good I forgave him for the snow which was still melting somewhere down my back.

All joking gone from his voice, Leif bowed his head and said the blessing. “Dear Father, we thank you for the wonderful food you have given us for this special day. We thank you, too, for family and dear friends”—as he said that his fingers tightened on mine and I found myself blushing and squeezing his hand in return—“Thank you for the gift of Christmas and all that it means.” He paused and swallowed, “and please be with dear Papa who is so sick. Amen.”

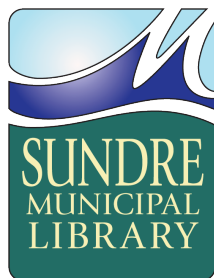
“Amen!” we all echoed, but for a few moments the joy was gone from the evening as we all thought of Mr. Arneson who was growing weaker with each passing day.

Then Mrs. Arneson picked up her napkin, gave it a quick brush across her eyes, and handed me the platter of succulent spare ribs. “Come on everyone, eat! I didn’t make all this food for you to let it get cold and feed it to the dog—although for sure he will get a Christmas dinner too.”

“He won’t get *my* dinner,” declared Leif’s youngest sister, helping herself to a big piece of lefse (Norwegian potato bread). Everyone dissolved into laughter and we all piled our plates high with delicious Norwegian dishes. I did, however, draw the line at lutefisk. Fish treated with lye and turned into a yellowish slime was just beyond my digestive abilities.

Continued on page 14

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE SUNDRE LIBRARY

**Sundre Library Hours**

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9:00—5:00 PM
Wednesday	noon—8:00 PM
Thursday	noon—5:00 PM
Friday	noon—5:00 PM
Saturday	11:00—3:00 PM
Sundre Library (403) 638-4000, www.sundre.prl.ab.ca	

← **New Hours**

Parent Connect

Tuesdays in November, 9:30—11:30 AM
Drop-in time for parents and children 0-5 yrs.

Teen Takeover Games Night

Thursday, November 3, 6:30 – 8:30 PM
Games, food and fun for teens. FREE.

Genealogy

Tuesday, November 1 and 15, 9:30—11:30 AM
Research your roots.

Stories & Stuff

Thursday, November 17, 11:00 AM – NOON
Stories, rhymes, songs for ages 0-5yrs.

PLEASE
SUPPORT

**The Sundre Library's
SILENT AUCTION
November 15—25th**

*All sorts of crafts, treasures, and
Christmas gifts you'll find nowhere else.*



**Auction donations
accepted until
November 10.
Bidding closes 4 pm
Nov 25.**



No Phone Bids.

Teacher, continued from page 12

As we finished dessert Mrs. Arneson gathered a little of every kind of food onto a plate and minced it all into small pieces. "If you will please excuse me, I will go now and give my husband his supper. If he feels well enough we will all join him for coffee later."

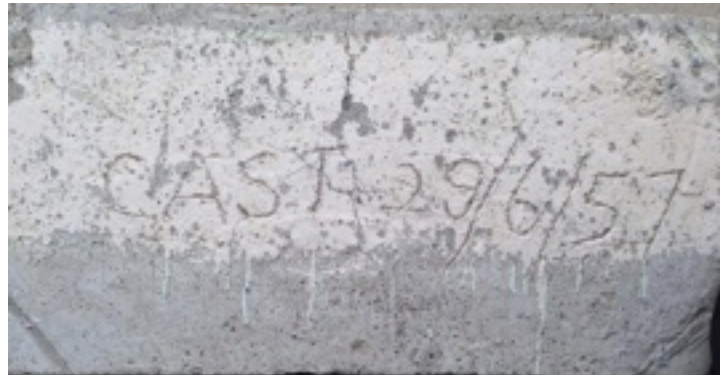
While she was gone I began to gather the dishes for washing. The children all had jobs around the kitchen and they willingly pitched in to show me where everything was and to help put away the leftovers. "All right," Leif told them, "you were a good help. Santa Claus may forget how bad you have been all year and bring you something after all. Now go and play by the tree. We will do the dishes." With that he grabbed a towel and began to dry dishes as fast as I could wash them. Hmm. A man who was useful in the kitchen. This could be a very good thing.

To be continued

Acme, continued from page 4

services: a Library (of course), several restaurants, agricultural businesses, many recreational opportunities, a school (K-6 and 10-12) and a monthly online newsletter. Sunterra Farms, just outside Acme, has recently opened a 20 acre greenhouse (strawberries, tomatoes), with plans to expand to four times that size in the next few years.

I sometimes think of "what we leave behind." In the case of Acme, it's a concrete cornerstone, poured and inscribed by my dad for a new church in the late 1950s. The church burned down a few years later, but the cornerstone is still there. I recognize Dad's handwriting.



Bergen Ladies Aid Auction

Saturday November 12th

Doors open 7:00 p.m.

Sale starts 7:30 p.m.

Auctioneer: Ken Walker

Quilts, Crafts, Sewing, Knitting, Baking, Etc

Free Coffee & Donuts after the sale

A Walk On the Wild Side, continued from page 14

Our drive from Victoria to the Park in Charles's vehicle introduced us to a number of Vancouver Island fauna. At Port San Juan estuary we watched natives fishing for salmon. Charles tried as well, with no bites, though we could see salmon jumping. A seal seemed to be having better luck with its catch. While Charles fished, the rest of us beachcombed. A flock of Marbled Murrelets flew past us. These little seabirds are interesting because, for two centuries, no one could figure out where they nest. Finally, in the 1970s, it was discovered that they lay a single egg in the moss on branches of old growth conifers. The first nest in BC was found in Walbran in 1990.

Turning inland, we saw a black bear race across the road. The village of Youbou provided several opportunities to photograph Roosevelt Elk: what deer are to Sundre, Roosevelts are to Youbou. Of four subspecies in North America, these (also called Olympic Elk) are the largest. Males weigh from 700 to 1100 pounds, and some have been known to reach 1300 pounds. Named after Theodore Roosevelt by his friend, the mammologist T.C. Hart Merrian, they dwell in the temperate rain forests along the Pacific from Alaska to Washington State.

We arrived at Misty Valley campsite in Carmanah as night was falling. Charles quickly set up a tent for him and his mom. Bob and I got the penthouse: a Thule tent atop the Subaru. Replete with a flysheet and a thick foam base, it was very comfortable—except when nature called in the middle of the night. I am not good at descending ladders in a hurry!

The next day we hiked about eight hours with a break for lunch. Even with the drought, the exposed tree roots and intermittent boardwalks were very slippery. It was a struggle, trying to decide whether to watch one's feet to avoid tripping or looking upward to admire the



A Roosevelt elk

treetops! Charles was determined to show us every accessible giant tree. Some trunks were covered with moss while the beautiful, shiny wood grain in others was highly visible. Many bore polypore fungi, while the ground too was littered with mushrooms: chanterelles, angel wings, chicken of the woods and many kinds I didn't recognize.

Next morning we drove into neighbouring Pacific Rim National Park to see the Cheewaht Giant, the largest Western Red Cedar in Canada. There was no signpost to mark the faint trail: Charles just knew where to park the car. Getting to the tree involved descending slopes by rope and clambering over a lot of deadfall, but it was worth it! We celebrated by picnicking at its base. Then, back to Victoria in time for Thanksgiving. And what a lot we Canadians have to be thankful for—including the varied and amazing scenery right across our land.



Breakfast time with our car roof tent on the right



From My Office Window

by Brian and Kim Allan

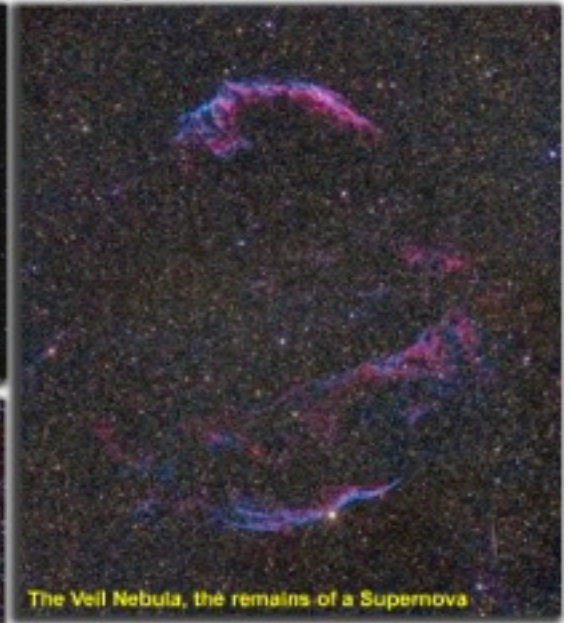
It has been a while since I did any serious astrophotography, November 2020 to be exact. Cloud, haze and forest fire smoke are not great for the sky conditions needed for astro-imaging. So it is great to see some clear skies and get back into shooting the heavens! The following images range from solar, to planetary, to galaxies, to nebulae with a STEVE.



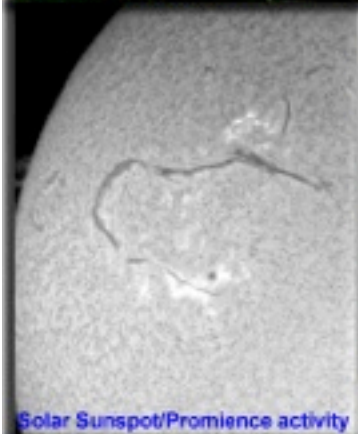
STEVE, a very rare type of Aurora Borealis



Hercules Globular Star Cluster



The Veil Nebula, the remains of a Supernova



Solar Sunspot/Prominence activity



Pacman Nebula, a huge cloud of hydrogen gas



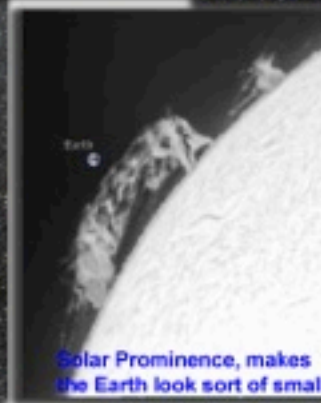
Triangulum (Pinwheel) Galaxy, a partner of Andromeda



Andromeda Galaxy, one of my favorite targets



Planet Jupiter ->>



Solar Prominence, makes the Earth look sort of small



Star Trails over Emerald Bay at Waterton National Park