

MILLARVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



President's Message:

We are very delighted to welcome many founding members this inaugural year and were delighted that so many were able to come and celebrate events with us.

August was our introductory membership launch commemorating the 130th Birthday of Millarville Hamlet. This was a very successful afternoon as former and present owners or descendants of Millarville General Store shared favorite memories and what life was like in the different eras. Gene Blakley, who invited the various speakers, was our MC and aptly shared historical memories and humorous anecdotes.

1892 – 1911 Malcolm Millar



Millarville Post Office and trading post, located east of hamlet, by Three Point Creek.

1911 – 1920 W.H. King

Jean Slemko shared how her grandfather, W. H. King, relocated the store & post office on



the hill on the north side of his house. It had a room for the post office in the back of the building, living quarters upstairs and a basement for storage. This is approximately where Millarville Crossing is today.



**1926 – 1944
Norman &
Marquerite
Pegler**

Steve Pegler talked about his grandparents who built a new store & later post office (1941)

in the present location.

1944 – 1956 Jappy & Martha Douglass



Joan Christianson shared about her dad, a grandson of Malcolm Millar. He and his wife added a coffee shop, moved the McFarland Lumber Yard office from High River attaching it to the store. She remembers when Joe Fisher rode

his horse into the store to pick up his mail, leaving horseshoe marks on the oiled wooden floor. A real taste of the wild wild west.

1956 – 1958 Mr. & Mrs. Carl Orthner

1958 – 1959 Clark Jacobson



His son, Perry Jacobson, explained that his Dad started R.R.1 Millarville. Clark Jacobson was the mail carrier for several years, with help from his wife Pat.

1959 – 1974 Arlie, Veryl, & Ron Laycraft



Arlie and Ron reconstructed the store as it was in three pieces, putting a roof over all three. His Dad bought Ron's share in 1968, and Ron went to university. The front of the store had dry goods

(shirts, pants, rubber boots) and on the other side were hardware goods (nails, bolts, barb wire).



Salt blocks and feed were in the storage shed. Veryl ran the post office. Customers came inside and their mail was handed out from the wicket. Pearl delivered rural route mail more than 11 years, calling herself, "Pearl the Mail Girl",

so that dogs wouldn't bite her as she wasn't the mail man.

<p>1974 – 1978 Nick & Janet Cooke – made many changes and added living quarters to the back of the store.</p>	<p>1978 John and Karen Clarke – a sad period for the store as John Clarke was electrocuted at the store.</p>
<p>1978 – 1982 Rick & Pam Shindruk – Gas pumps were removed from in front of the store.</p>	<p>1982 – 1993 Brian & Wendy Kinsman</p>  <p>Unfortunately, they suffered the loss of their store and home by fire December 22, 1988. The community rallied around them, the store was rebuilt within a year and stands as it is today. They became an agency for the Alberta Treasury Branch, now known as ATB Financial. They moved the mail boxes outside and Brian started Millarville Power Products, now known as Equipment Express (Okotoks).</p>
<p>1993 – 2015 Mike & Leslie Patterson</p>  <p>Changes such as: Canada Post automation, movie rental to streaming services, and a time when you could get a liquor license if you were a certain distance from a liquor store. Mike & Leslie acknowledged the valuable help they received from long time employees, and previous owners. It was the sense of community that made their years here so fulfilling.</p>	<p>2015 – 2020 Hamid & <i>Nazima Narsingani</i></p>  <p>Their son, Irfanali Moledina, shared that his Mom and Dad added the Lottery and Hallmark cards to the store at this time.</p>

2020 – present



Tim Babey is putting his own “stamp” on the Millarville General Store, with grocery items, liquor, salt blocks, local crafts, books & continues to be a postal outlet. This store has a

rural atmosphere, showcasing local historical photos and artifacts.



Our delightful Honorary President, Barb

Godwin (Granny Goose), and her daughter Laura.

Millarville Motors 1945 - present



Ev Prestie shared stories of her Dad Hans Backs who started Millarville Motors, located about halfway between the store and the existing school. Ginger Douglas,

brother of Jappie who owned Millarville Store at the time, started another service station where Millarville Motors now exists. There wasn't enough business for the two service stations so Hans bought him out, as he was able to purchase the land as well as the garage. Hans' son Bob, and wife, Joyce then took over the management of Millarville Motors. This business is still in the family with Bob's wife Joyce, and son Terry now owning it. Three generations!

Postage Stamp Contest Winners



Livy Tosh and Louise Patterson Bruns were awarded gift certificates.

Treasured western equipment from the late 1800's, honoring the time period of the first Millarville post office, were exhibited.

Other artifacts unearthed by Millarville Community School students in 2005-6 demonstrated hamlet life in the 1940's Oil Boom, with many families living in skid shacks. Photos recorded our only Royal visitor to Millarville, Her Excellency Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, in 2006.

Participants had a chance to visit, reconnect with neighbours/ friends, reminisce, view the various displays/photos, and sample tasty saskatoon tarts.



Our second event was the Priddis & Millarville Fair. Louise & Ev organized various vintage household items for examination as well as photos of the Hamlet and surrounding area. Southern Alberta Pioneers & Descendants members also teamed up with us to display various historical photos. Interested community members and others wanting to know more historical information about this area visited our displays.

Our third event was an afternoon of celebrating stories of the two Ranchers' Halls. Gene Blakley shared info about the original hall, built in 1895, on land donated by Joseph Fisher. It was built by community labour and logs brought down from the hills. It was a special gathering place for community to attend dances, Christmas concerts, boxing matches, and other social events. In 1976, this hall was moved to Heritage Park.



Ev Prestie explained how her father, Hans Backs, supplied a new Ford car to be raffled off to get money to build a new Ranchers' Hall in the hamlet in the early 1950's. Local ladies went to Calgary weekly to sell raffle tickets on 8th Avenue. This raffle paid for the building materials and the car. Men provided labour and ladies supplied food.

Louise Patterson Bruns provided music, fashion, and stories of changes over the years. She chronicled how music came from the "Old Country" in the early years and sang songs from each of the decades, reminding audience members of many memories. As well, Louise shared interesting artifacts such as sheet music, ladies' dresses and accessories.

Attendees shared special memories of the two halls as well. Tea, coffee, and cookies were supplied and attended to by Lorraine Clark, Karen Blakley, and Cathie Scatterty. Memberships were handled by Marie Nylund and Christine Lederer at the door. Lorretta Stabler invited members to view the various historical photos and artifacts downstairs which commemorate community involvement.

Our intentions in hosting these events are to help others make connections about what our community offers now and offer historical perspectives of past endeavors and accomplishments. Social events give community members an opportunity to visit with each other, celebrate historical events and share memories, giving participants a sense of belonging, a sense of purpose, and a sense of worth. This, in turn, helps to build and strengthen our community.

Thank you, members, for joining us on this special journey.

Thank you Carol Papworth and Blaine Clark for photographing our special day.

Please remember to come to Millarville Racetrack Hall for our **Special Resolution Meeting**, January 10th 7:00 pm.

The By-law revisions sent to your email address are to be discussed and voted on that evening. These by-laws can also be viewed at

<http://millarvillehistoricalsociety.weebly.com/events.html>

And now to meet our Dynamic Team of Millarville Historical Society Directors!



HONORARY PRESIDENT

Barb Godwin (known to many as Granny Goose) has volunteered in the Millarville area since she moved here with her family more than 50 years ago. She was awarded Millarville Racing and Agriculture Society (MRAS) Life Member status in 2002 for her long-standing volunteerism. Barb was a Priddis & Millarville Fair Manager for almost two decades, an exhibitor, supporter, and volunteered for numerous work days for many years. She contributed articles for “Going to the Fair”. In 2018, Barb was awarded Outstanding Contributor/Exhibitor of the Priddis & Millarville Fair for her exceptional contributions at MRAS. Barb

has mentored many young kids demonstrating the importance of our country atmosphere, encouraging youth to enter fair exhibits, and sharing her love of our community. She has been a passionate, dedicated Historical Committee Manager for more than two decades, organizing historic files, cleaning MRAS trophies and updating engraving records. Barb continues to be a strong advocate for the MRAS community, sharing her pride and knowledge of the history of this area, stressing the importance and the welfare of the MRAS.

In 2017, Barb suggested the Millarville Historical Committee should plant 150 trees at the Racetrack to commemorate Canada’s birthday. She spearheaded this initiative and committee members dug young spruce trees from ditches and with the help of Millarville Community School students, these were planted at the Racetrack.

Barb’s acts of generosity, her leadership with youth, and passion for community building are true acts of public service!



PRESIDENT

My name is Lorretta Stabler. My husband, Clarence and our two sons, Rory and Dean, moved to the Millarville Hamlet more than forty years ago. We truly believed that this would be our “utopia” - daily spectacular mountain views and actively participating in a strong committed community. We were so right! Our sons were able to walk to school (Millarville Community School) and I was fortunate to teach there for more than three decades, in the community that I love.

Teaching history has been my passion, and I have especially enjoyed supporting learners as they investigated local history and created historical connections. In 2005, Patti Thorne and I were awarded the Governor General’s Excellence in Teaching Canadian History Award for our project on Millarville Archaeology. Students, parents, and community members learned about the 1940’s oil boom in the hamlet of Millarville by digging up artifacts, recording and researching their origins, uses, and interviewing local community members. Andrea Richardson, an archaeologist, as

well as other key experts from the University of Calgary, supported this authentic learning project. Through questioning, discussing, reading and researching stories of significant Albertans and Canadians who helped shape our country, students gained a new and more personal perspective of local history.

Volunteering at the Millarville Racetrack for the various events over the years has further expanded my understanding of how the agricultural “roots” and natural resources have shaped this vibrant community. More than five decades ago, many volunteers anticipated the enormous value of recording local history and published Our Foothills and Foothills Echoes. Thankfully, many historical committee volunteers since then have continued to collect local stories for our archives. For more than ten years, I’ve enjoyed working with the Millarville Historical Society, exploring the relationships of the pioneers, ranchers, oil workers, and early entrepreneurs who developed this incredible area.

Our ultimate goal is to develop a museum for our area, with photos, artifacts, and community historians accessible to students, community members, and the general public. Our purpose would be to actively engage in further developing and recording understandings of our area and its history - for others to learn from and future generations to enjoy. This will be an incredible “community building” initiative.

VICE PRESIDENT

Hello, my name is Gene Blakley, and I was born in the old Turner Valley Hospital and received my middle name from Dr. Dave Lander who delivered me. My mothers’ father, Joseph Fisher, homesteaded on the property that my wife Karen and I live on in 1883 and the name of the creek running through the property was named after him. We have two children, Chelsea, and Sean, who are now parents themselves and went to school at Millarville. Living here definitely set them up for success in life being exposed to the type of people in this area.

I was out of the area for several years to pursue my careers, but, returned and for the last 40 years have farmed part time on a piece of my grandfather’s homestead. We live here now and plan on being taken out with our boots on. I worked for the Alberta Forest Service and eventually moved to the Calgary Fire Department. In both careers I was rewarded with working with some of the best people I could ever be associated with. History was how we learned to access the knowledge to remedy situations much the same as the oral history helps us as a community to move forth.



Over the years we have volunteered in the community and believe that is the responsibility of all as the rewards outweigh the small effort required. Now in retirement I have been on the Board of Directors of the Southern Alberta Pioneers and their Descendants and have just completed serving as Secretary of that organization.

This past year, after the urging of Barb Godwin, I decided to join the Board of Directors of the Millarville Historical Society. Having experience with the SAPD, I recognized one area that needed to be addressed and that was recognition of the Society. With consultation with John

Rauchert, who is the IT volunteer for SAPD, we decided the best way to accomplish that was to start a Facebook Group page. On this page it is my goal is to preserve the work of all the volunteers that have kept the history of this area alive in book form and spirit. So far, I believe that that is being accomplished with much work ahead.

The history of this area was a passion for my mother, Jean Blakley, and having received the oral history she provided it has become a passion of mine. The true reward of my small part is relearning people that I knew as a child and making the connections with the unified effort of our ancestors to make this a truly wonderful place to live and raise children. Having grown up on the farm, during a time that had us doing most work as my grandfather had done, instilled the skill set that has served me well over the years and see that skill set being extended to my children even though they are not on the farm.

One of the benefits of working with the Southern Alberta Pioneers is the value of a space to contain and record the history of the pioneers. One of deficits of SAPD was the restriction that your family had to have been settled before 1890. With Millarville that age restriction will not be in place and thus we will be able to invite all that have an interest to join us. The long-term plan is to create a paid membership and that will be given access to the ability to publicly record their family's history. Attend historical events where family members will present their families history. An annual round up dinner to celebrate the years accomplishments. And the icing on the cake so to speak will be the creation of a Museum to contain the recordings and mementos that are pertinent to the area. This will not only serve as a place to expose our children to their history but also for travellers through the area to glean an appreciation.

Realising that this Society has accumulated and filed a lot of the history related paper and mementos, it is now time to go to the next level and create something of extended value in the community.



TREASURER

I'm Christine Lederer, and my husband Rob and I moved to the hamlet of Millarville in the summer of 1992. Our association with the community, however, began ten years earlier through my brother and sister-in-law, Tony and Maureen Hampshire and their family.

I am a retired teacher, having enjoyed 16 years of teaching at Millarville Community School. During that time, I watched history unfold during a very special archeological dig that also involved her daughter Hannah.

Our family has formed deep friendships and connections in this very special community. I consider it is a true pleasure to work with neighbours in this association, sharing in the preservation of the rich and vibrant history of the Millarville area.

SECRETARY

My name is Cathie Scatterty and I was born and raised in the beautiful Millarville area. My maternal grandfather, A.S.Cannon immigrated to Canada from England, settling on his Millarville area land in 1889.

Volunteering is a large part of my life, and over the years I have been involved with 4-H Clubs, CountryLane Quilt Guild, Millarville Hort Club, Priddis-Millarville Fair, Millarville Races, and the Half Marathon. My time with Millarville Historical started in 1997 as secretary and has continued since.

I would love to see memberships available for the Millarville Historical Society, as I believe this would encourage more people to become involved and thus be able to spread the wonderful history of this area.

The wonderful end result of many members could be a museum to house historical records and artifacts.



DIRECTOR

Hi, my name is Louise Patterson Bruns and I was born into the Millarville Community in 1946, to Arthur and Theresa Patterson. And though I lived away from here for many years, working as a Music Teacher and Musical Director in Rocky Mountain House, I always came back to the Fair to help my Mom and Grandma Janette Burrows feed the judges from the kitchen of the Race Track Hall. My aunts and cousins did that for over 50 years. I still have my Mom's Pie Box. In recent years, my children Matt, Christa, and Lindsie and grandchildren have been enthusiastic exhibitors at the Fair.

My grandparents Frank and Edith Patterson homesteaded this farm at 33.21.2.W5 in 1902, so we have been here for 120 years. Frank Patterson came to Canada in 1889 to his cousins at the Bedingfeld Ranch and the Bar U. My dad Art was a true pioneer, builder, inventor, and old-time musician, who farmed here with horses

right up into the 1960's. We have a great collection of machinery that has been here since the beginning, so this is kind of a living museum.

Art was always a community man who worked tirelessly at the Fair, Races, and Christ Church Millarville. My mom, Theresa, volunteered as Secretary Treasurer of the Races and Fair and was founder of the Hort Club and Ladies' Guild, and co-published *Gardening Under the Arch*. I feel very connected to this land and this community and am an avid member of the Millarville Historical Society. I have been researching and writing stories of the area for many years, which I have been happy to share in [Going to the Fair Vol. I and II](#), [Cooking Under the Arch](#), and Millarville Historical Society site on Facebook.

DIRECTOR

My name is Ev (nee Eveline Backs) Prestie. My Dad, Hans Backs, was from Hamburg, Germany and moved to the Olds Sundre area in 1926 as he wanted to be a cowboy. My Mom, Merle Ritten, was from Minnesota and her family moved to Southern Alberta in 1908, as there were no trees they built and lived in a sod shack the first year.

Our family, Hans and Merle Backs (Ev, Bob, and Phyllis) moved to the hamlet of Majorville in the summer of 1942, which at that time was about 4 miles west and north of Millarville, as the roads were very winding because they followed the old horse and buggy trails. There were no school busses then, the kids all walked together about 2 miles to Sheep Creek School. In Grade one, I remember being late and missed walking with the other kids and arrived at first recess with a bouquet of wild flowers.



My Dad worked in the oil patch for a couple of years. then in 1945 we moved to Millarville, where Gwen was born, and Dad started Millarville Motors. It was then situated between the existing location and the school. All the land where Millarville exists now was owned by the Ted Rawlinson family, and people would rent a lot for \$7 a month. There was no electricity as Calgary Power didn't come into the area until 1950.

As it was a long way for kids to walk, my dad turned the back of a half-ton pick up truck into a "covered wagon", and thus was one of the first school buses at Sheep Creek School. Whoever worked at the garage and wasn't busy became the bus driver that day, although in warm weather, we still walked. Millarville Motors is still in the family – passed down three generations from Hans, Bob & Joyce, and now Terry Backs.

1947 was a memorable year as we got our first horse. Then when I was twelve, my dad bought me my own horse. I rode bareback with my friends, constantly, in an eight-mile circumference

of Millarville. In 1950, we went to school at the Home Camp Recreation Building as they moved Sheep Creek School to the hamlet of Millarville, where it still is today. Myself, my brother and sisters all went to Millarville School as did my children, Greg, Darryl, and Tracey Bruce as did several of my grandchildren. I went to Mount Royal College for grade 10 and Innisfail for Grades 11 & 12. After graduation, I worked in Calgary for four years, and then was married to Clayton Bruce from 1959-72. We had three children: Greg, Darryl, and Tracey. In 1963, we moved back to Millarville, God's country.

Hans, my dad, got into the thoroughbred race horse business in 1964. He did very well until he passed away in 1967. At that time, I took over the stables and hired a trainer, J.D. Leavitt. The years operating the racing stable, Hillside Acres, were an amazing experience. I met Vic in 1973 as he and J.D. were good friends. We were married in 1974 and continued in the thoroughbred industry from which we retired in 1989. Vic trained thoroughbreds at Calgary and Edmonton and was Clerk of the Course for Millarville Races for a few years.

In 1973, I started driving school bus in the Millarville area and did so for thirty-three years. It was a very interesting and sometimes challenging experience and, in the end, became something I enjoyed. I always enjoyed volunteering at the Races and the Fair, first in the food concession, then in the Arts & Craft building (the Quonset).

In 2004/05, I was able help locate areas where the old skid sheds were located in the 1940's in the hamlet of Millarville. I talked with the Grades 4/5 classes about who lived there, and what it was like to live in that time period. It was a great adventure as I always loved history. In 2006, the Governor General, Her Excellency Michael Jean, actually visited the archaeological site, spoke with students, parents, and community members.

I've worked with the historical committee for the past few years and our goal is to have a museum, to which I will be able to donate many artifacts that I have collected over the years. There is so much history and artifacts to preserve, things our children will never see, unless we can save it for them.

Our lives have always been horses, horses, horses and all of our kids grew up riding and still do. I have been competing in a Western Horse Event called Team Cattle Penning since 2006 and still do.



DIRECTOR

My name is Marie Nylund and I am a 4th generation descendant of the Muncaster family who homesteaded on the Middle Fork of Fish Creek in 1907. I was raised at Bragg Creek. I married Johnny Nylund from Square Butte and we lived at the Ballachey Ranch for 4 years before moving to Banff National Park in 1973. I worked in the Corporate Services Department of the Town of Banff for many years. We raised our family in Banff before moving to the Government of Canada's Ya Ha Tinda Ranch when Johnny became the Ranch Manager. I became the ranch Record Keeper/Clerk. Seven years later, we retired and bought a small acreage at Bergen. We sold the acreage in 2017 and moved to Turner Valley.

I took an interest in history when I lived at the Ya Ha Tinda and set up a small interpretive museum in an old log granary. This little museum accentuated the public tours of the ranch buildings. I enjoy helping to preserve the history of the Canadian National Park Warden Service as the Secretary-Treasurer-Membership director of the Park Warden Service Alumni Society.

As a way to provide our three kids and our grandchildren with their family heritage, I researched and recorded our family history. This led me to an interest in the rich history of the many families who homesteaded in Alberta. It is exciting to be a part of the Millarville Historical Society's goal of a creating a museum to preserve and showcase the history of this area and provide a legacy for future generations.

I have been part of the Millarville Historical Society Board for only a year. As Membership Director, it is wonderful to see that our membership has grown significantly in the past year and I am looking forward to seeing it grow even more in the future.

DIRECTOR

My name is Lorraine Clark and I am married and blessed with 3 children, and 4 grandchildren. I live on an acreage, north of Millarville with my husband Blaine. I was born in Calgary but moved around doing my school years as my father was in the armed forces. After assignments in Germany, Ontario and rural Alberta, our family settled back in Calgary in the mid 70's. Later, with my husband and growing family, I continued moving on a regular basis, locally and internationally, including 2 years in Japan and 5 years in Indonesia, then again back to Calgary, before moving to Millarville in early 2012. As a result of these travels, I am very interested in local history and cultures.

Throughout my adult life my primary job has been as a mother and home maker. Other work experience includes



retail, medical assistant and working in a garden centre. My interests include gardening, cooking, reading, hiking and travel.

With grown children in Calgary, my husband and I made the big decision to have a lifestyle change, moving from the Calgary suburbs, to acreage living in the wonderful Millarville community.

Over the past 10 years, I have spent a lot of time learning how to garden under the Arch, with the challenge of 95 frost free days/year and a host of local predators. In addition, I spend time learning to preserve the fruits of my labor and adapting to Mother Nature's variability. Early on I started volunteering at the Millarville Library, joined a local book club and volunteered at the Millarville Fair. In 2013, grandmother responsibilities added to my busy schedule, in a very good way, and 9 years later we have 4 beautiful loving grandkids to enjoy, while still actively volunteering in the community.

In my position on the MHS Board, I have helped to plan and organize the 130th Birthday celebration for the Millarville General Store, and the recent Ranchers' Hall event. I appreciate the long, unique history of the Millarville area, and the people who are part of that history. As a member of the board, I will support the MHS mission to collect, document and communicate the history of our community, including the longer-term goal of having a Millarville museum, to archive, preserve and display valuable local artifacts for current and future generations.

A key part of my role initially is to support various planned MHS events as it moves forward with a new vision.



DIRECTOR

My name is Norma Dawson and I became interested in the Millarville Historical Society when I was a director on the MRAS Board from 2011-2013. I was the liaison between the board and the historical committee, and once my stint on the board was over, I started going to the historical meetings and became involved with this amazing group.

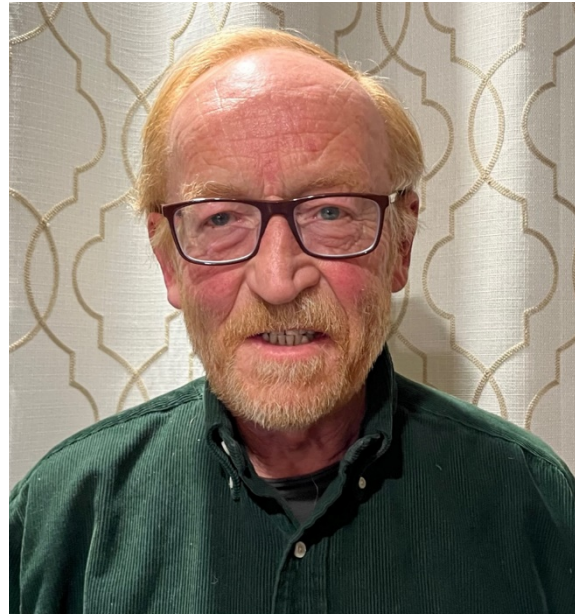
Originally from Lachine, Quebec, my husband and I and our two children moved here in 1976 and my youngest daughter was born in Alberta in December of that year. My children all went to Millarville School and we were all involved in various aspects in the community. Having worked in the school, the community library, the general store, and having volunteered in community groups, sports, continuing education, Millarville Community Foundation and the Millarville & District Rec Board, I feel that this is truly my community and its history is worth preserving.

To be able to have a museum to house all of the historical items and documents that have been accumulated over the years would be such a benefit to the school, to the people in our area, and it would be a wonderful destination for visitors.

DIRECTOR

My name is Blaine Clark and I am a professional engineer, P. Eng., married with 3 children, and 4 grandchildren, living on an acreage, north of Millarville. I was born in Reston, Manitoba, but moved to Alberta in 1966 and made Calgary my home base, until moving to Millarville in 2012.

After graduating from the U of C, with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering, I joined Gulf Canada and began a 37-year engineering career in the oil and gas industry. My job provided numerous opportunities to move around, locally and internationally, taking on new projects and responsibilities. Two years in Japan, and 5 years in Indonesia provided valuable insight into different cultures, climates and lifestyles for the whole family, with the benefit of valuable work experience. Experience gained as a P. Eng. in various capacities includes production operations, gas processing, project management, business development, corporate development, financial analysis and management responsibilities.



In 2011, my wife Lorraine and I , made the big decision for a lifestyle change which involved a move from the Calgary suburbs, to acreage living in the wonderful Millarville community.

Over the past 10 years, I have spent most of my time learning the ropes of acreage life style. Time has been spent building “out buildings”, like a greenhouse, and other property development and maintenance projects. I enjoy restoring and improving things, like my antique car and motorcycle, and problem solving.

I served as a member of the MRAS Board of Directors for 3 years, and continues to support the local community. I recently joined the board of the Millarville Historical Society.

In my position on the MHS board I have helped to plan and organize the 130th Birthday celebration for the Millarville General Store. I appreciate the long, unique history of the Millarville area, and the people who are part of that history. As a member of the board, I will support the MHS mission to collect, document and communicate the history of our community, including the longer-term goal of having a Millarville museum, to archive, preserve and display valuable local artifacts for current and future generations.

A key part of my role is to start the planning process so the MHS can move forward, and make the museum a reality.



MILLARVILLE RACING & AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY LIASON

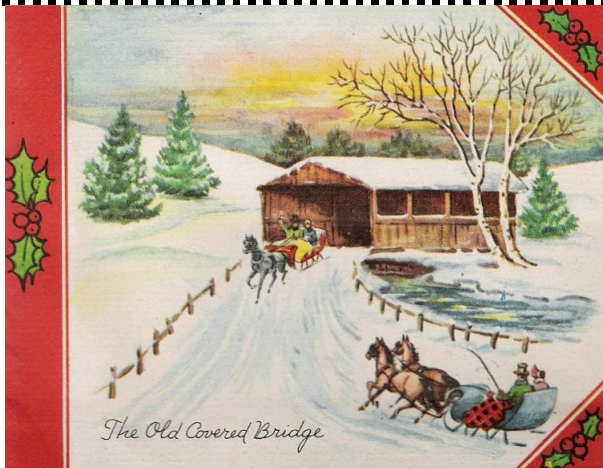
My name is Barb Parker and I am a retired Human Resources professional who worked in the oil and gas industry for 36 years.

I have been an active member of our local community since retirement. I became a Millarville Racing & Agricultural Society member in 2013 and began volunteering in the MRAS office in 2016. I have volunteered for several MRAS events including the ½ Marathon and the VIP Tent for the Millarville Races. I have been the Treasurer on the Fair Committee for 8 years, am on the organizing committee for The Kids Only Shoppe as well as a member on the marketing, financial stability and campground committees and am the historical committee board liaison. I became an interim member on the MRAS Board of Directors in July 2019 and an official board director in December 2019. I was elected as vice president on the board in 2020.

I've also been an active volunteer for the Foothills Magic of Christmas for the last 8 years assisting with the organization and wrapping of gifts to be distributed to various families in the Foothills community.

I thoroughly enjoy being involved at MRAS and giving back to our community. I have met some amazing people, have had some incredible experiences and have made many lasting friendships.

I live SW of Millarville on an acreage with my husband and our fur baby Belle.



CHRISTMAS TIME 1930's

By Joan E. Merryfield, January 2002

(Age 76)

One finds it difficult to write about past Christmases unless it is within the season of yet another Christmas. Thoughts move back through time to recall a most special time of year.

My brother and I were entrusted to drive by team and sleigh to our neighbour's living north of us. Their place was known as "the Fox Farm." We were to meet Jack Elsdon who

would be bringing the last Christmas mail, the last order of necessities and treats that would round out the holiday festivities. My Dad expected his brother, our Uncle Charles (Burby), who usually arrived several days before Christmas. Uncle Charles had not yet arrived, much to my father's disappointment, and his disappointment reflected through the family that we would be without the company of his brother on this Christmas as here it was Christmas Eve already!

My brother, John, who was about 12 years old at the time, drove Sam and Bill, my dad's team of horses. I was three years younger than John and I went along to open and close the many gates and to keep John company. Arriving at the Fox Farm we found that Jack Elsdon and his delivery truck had not arrived yet. After Sam and Bill were tied to a tree in the yard, we settled in along with neighbours to wait for the truck's arrival. The sky turned to snow clouds as dusk settled in. Darkness was upon us by the time we joyfully saw the approaching lights of the truck coming up the single-track roadway and turning into the Fox Farm.

Jack Elsdon always had helpers with him; sometimes they were neighbours that were returning home from the city. Soon the hustle and bustle of unloading was underway as everyone lent a helping hand. To our joy and surprise here was Uncle Charles among the many helping hands. Soon our share of the load was in the sleigh as the first gusts of wind brought the whirling snowflakes. Restless, Sam tossed his head and tightened his halter shank in his anxiety of getting on the trail. As Holiday greetings were exchanged, the halter shanks were untied and the team were ready to lose no time on the journey home. We felt safe in the fact that the horses knew the trail so well in the darkness, and that Uncle Charles' expertise as a teamster was a bonus to our safety. As the sleigh sped along the winding trail with the horses at a steady trot, trace chains jingling, the wind picked up and snow grew heavier.

As the horses turned down the muskeg trail (our winter trail) we had only a mile and three-quarters to travel and only three more gates to open and close. How happy we were to have our Uncle with us! He was the uncle who taught us to dance and joined in to play a variety of games in the evenings and was the general life of any gathering.

As we travelled along, we discussed the great surprise it would be to our parents to have him (Uncle Charles) join us for a family Christmas. "Let's play a trick on them." Uncle Charles suggested to me. He said, "When we drive up to the door to unload I want you to jump off the sleigh and run in and tell your parents that you and your brother have picked up a stranger on the trail and had brought him home".

Surprised apprehension showed on my parents' faces. Uncle Charles, the trickster, pulled his collar up around his ears totally obliterating his face. Jumping from the sleigh, he followed me into the kitchen where he slowly uncovered his face and to my parents' surprise he said, "Mary and Leo! Merry Christmas!" Quickly looking about to the younger children, he exclaimed "Good Night Nurse! How everyone has grown!" Followed by his favourite expression, "Good Night Shirt! Merry Christmas everyone!"



Postscript from Marie Nylund: My parents, Joan and Jack Merryfield lived in the hamlet of Bragg Creek, later Redwood Meadows, and finally Big Hill Lodge in Cochrane. My Uncle John Burby took over the ranch (Home quarter NE ¼ 18-22-4-W5) from his parents Leo and Mary (nee Muncaster) Burby. He lived with and cared for my grandparents until their passing. He married later in life and continued to live on the ranch until into his 90's. The ranch remained in the family until Uncle John's passing in 2016. (See page 458 Our Foothills for the Muncaster story)

2023 HAPPY NEW YEAR