

MUSEUM NEWS

Issue Twenty One | Winter 2021



How to Find Us

Box 367
901 George Street,
Enderby, BC V0E 1V0
250-838-7170
enderbymuseum@shaw.ca
www.enderbymuseum.ca

Hours of Operation

The Museum is open
Tuesday - Saturday
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Who We Are

Administrator – Jackie Pearase
Board of Directors 2020-2021
President: Sandra Farynuk
Vice-president: Sue Phillips
Secretary: Bob Cowan
Treasurer: Diana Inselberg
Directors: Judy Fischer,
Joan Cowan



This vertical log home on Emeny Road built in 1909 was lost to fire at the end of January. [edms #377]

A Message from Museum President Sandra Farynuk:

While we have been getting glimpses of spring already, winter is still reminding us that it, like the pandemic, is not over yet. Meanwhile, we have all been busy at your museum, updating files and adding new ones. The Facebook page that Jackie has been posting on daily with photos and stories from the past has been enthusiastically received and created a lot of interest in our City's history.

As we had to cancel all our fundraising efforts, except the Loonie Tree, we are very appreciative of all the donations that have been coming in. Our museum recognizes these with plaques for both the "Donator" and the "In Memory of" Enderby's pioneers.

We have all our COVID protocols in place so we encourage everyone to come in and research some family history, along with old photos, or even update our genealogy charts we have on long time Enderby residents and their subsequent generations.

As always, we thank you for your support and hopefully, we can have our AGM in the near future.

Heritage Week 2021 - February 15-21

Museum notes

By Jackie Pearase



On the job

Let me start by saying how much I am enjoying my position at the museum. I absolutely love this job. Every day here is something new, which is funny to say when you work at a place that preserves things that are old. Every job I do leads me down several different paths, each one providing some new knowledge. I am learning about the people, events, buildings, objects and places that have played a role in Enderby's past (the good, the bad and the ugly), thus enhancing my local knowledge and making me better at my job. While COVID-19 has definitely stifled visits to the museum, it has given me this time to get better acquainted with my job, the volunteers and the needs of the museum. I certainly look forward to sharing my knowledge and enjoyment of local history with more people in the future.

Newsletter

In this newsletter I provide you with a few historical articles. I started with one on the Ashton Creek Store after someone asked me about previous owners. That led to a story on the store in Mara, which led to a story on George Meeres. This is typical of how things go for me in the museum – the search for one piece of information leads to many paths and knowledge. I aim to please so if there is a topic you would like me to cover in a future newsletter, please let me know.

Ashton Creek Store



Ashton Creek Store, 1952 [Reflections along the Spallumcheen]

The idea of providing Ashton Creek residents with the option of not having to travel all the way to town for supplies started post-World War II.

Bill Cromer and his wife built a small store, gas pump and living quarters at the Ashton Creek crossroads in 1947. A newspaper article from 1945 had the couple living at 107 Brickyard Rd. but a July 11, 1947 reads, "Bill Cromer almost completed his store and living quarters, ready to start a garage."

The couple then started building a new home in Ashton Creek "south of the road opposite A. Glushenko" as reported on Aug. 18, 1950. (Andy and Pearl Glushenko lived at 823 Mabel Lake Rd.)

The newspaper also reported in August 1950 that Dan Case had purchased the store and Audrey Hall ran it. The store changed hands again shortly after because Mr. and Mrs. George Rogers were the owners when Lorne and Beatrice Trueman bought it in 1952. They also bought the store's stock for \$200.

The Trueman's renovated the 14x28-foot store in 1957, adding more shelves and flooring, and insulating the unused garage for additional store and living space. Mildred Frederick and Marion Cooke were working part-time at the store.

In a 1983 article on the Trueman's, Lorne recalled how loggers would place their grocery orders at the store on Friday night to be picked up around 5 a.m. on Monday. "On some Monday mornings there would be a real traffic jam waiting to get their orders," he is quoted.

A 32x68-foot addition built in 1963 doubled the area of the store, kitchen and storerooms. In the book, *Reflections Along*

Travelling fox

The museum's stuffed red fox that used to sit with the loon and owl has a new home. The fox came to us via board member Judy Fischer who found it left behind in a home she was selling. With no visible fox population in these parts, the critter was a bit out of place here. So I had to respond when the International Fox Museum and Hall of Fame sent out a request for taxidermy foxes to be used in their facility that is undergoing a renovation. After some back and forth communication, photos and a search for proper packaging, our little fox made its way east. The Fox Museum notified us when the fox arrived and told us it would spend a week in the freezer to kill any uninvited guests that may have also made the trip. We hope to see a photo of the fox in its new digs once the renovations are complete.

Mannequins

We received two mannequins from the Richmond Museum last year and they are now ready for display. Unhappy with their stark white complexions, I enlisted the help of local artist Jamie Frazer. Jamie gave the ladies a coat of flesh-coloured paint and dolled up some Styrofoam heads that were then attached to the bodies. We can now display some of the wonderful clothing and hats donated to the museum over the years. First up will be a couple of wedding dresses donated to the museum along with some interesting information and photos.

Museum notes



Ashton Creek Store, 1963. [Reflections along the Spallumcheen]

the Spallumcheen, it states, "More shelves, larger refrigerators, a storage area, and an office for Lorne, provided a layout of general merchandise comparable to any small town store." Over 200 people attended a "store-warming" party to commemorate the new addition, enjoying food brought by local residents and music from The Melotones. The party went from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m.

The local fire department was called out to the store on April 7, 1966 to put out a fire that gutted a sawdust shed and charred half the carport. The fire was caused by a burning rubbish pile that got away.

The Truemans celebrated 20 years of business with a week-long Dollar Day Sale in March 1972 when the store was called the Red & White Food Store.

In September 1974, the Truemans sold the store to Jennie, John and Al Turner, who operated it under Ashton Creek Holdings Ltd. Les Robertson was the store manager. The siblings operated the store until April 1979 when Serge and Paritha Siemens came from Kamloops to become the new owners.

Tony and Sandy Oudman were the next owners of the store, bringing along daughter Lana and Sonja daPont as employees. A newspaper report said the store was closing in February 1988 but Pam and Ron Dillman were the new owners by May 1988. The couple came with their three children from Vancouver. They also brought Roger Kumar to work in the store with local employee Donna Tulak.

In October 1991, the Dillmans sold the business to Ray Maas and Doug Jones. The following month, the new owners cut off their relationship with Canada Post, shutting down the post office in the store. Maas said they opted to close the outlet after being unable to reach an agreement with Canada Post that would generate enough income to make the franchise viable.

Facebook

The museum's Facebook page is once again active. I try to post a photograph and information daily and the response has been good. It is hard to determine what people like to see – people, buildings, events – so I try to mix it up. If there is a photo or information you want to see posted, let me know. A recent series of photos and information on Enderby buildings from the 1980s proved to be very popular so I think the extra bit of work I did to provide some background history paid off. I plan to complement our wedding dress display with some posts about local couples whose wedding photos are in our archives. I am short on wedding photos from the 1970s onward, though. So if you have nuptial photos from those eras and want to add to our archives (and help me out), send them on over.

Vault

The project to construct a new vault to protect our historical paperwork continues. Two contractors have visited the museum to consult about the project so they can provide quotes on the work. The city informed us that the job may entail hiring an architect, which was not encouraging as that would certainly add considerable cost and time to the project. We then decided to also explore the option of going instead with a custom-made fireproof storage cabinet. James Coers of Revolution Machine Works Inc. right here in Enderby came to have a look at what we need and determine if it is something he can help with. Stay tuned.



Museum notes

Roger and Louise Vincent were next to operate the store, making their purchase in August 1993. The store underwent many improvements under their ownership. They began selling lottery tickets in 2001 but slow sales resulted in the service being revoked less than one year later. A rural agency store approved by the BC Liquor Control Commission in August 2002 allowed the store to provide beer, wine and hard liquor to customers. In 2003, the Vincents added a large above-ground gas storage tank, moved the gas pumps to a safer location and moved the propane tank to provide more parking. An outdoor patio, flower boxes and hanging baskets added beauty while a new sign advertised the changes.

The couple went on to refurbish the store's interior in 2004 and added more hardware and electrical stock.

The Vincents passed the gas pumps over to the current owners, Ruth and Jeff Williams, in 2006. The couple moved to the area from Sherwood Park, Alberta. Ruth grew up in Armstrong and her sister Linda Furlong was already a resident of Ashton Creek. Ruth and Jeff also did some improvements, updating the gas pumps, installing a digital sign and offering lunch specials.

In a testament to the smart business decision by the Cromers over 50 years ago, the Ashton Creek General Store continues to serve local residents throughout the year, with tourists adding extra business in the summer when they head to the lake and in the winter when sledders hit Hunters Range. .



Getting a head

Museum administrator Jackie Pearase helps prepare Styrofoam heads for the new mannequins being used to display clothing from the textiles collection.

[Photo Jamie Frazer]

Volunteers

I cannot say enough good things about our dedicated volunteers. We have persevered throughout the pandemic, continuing the many tasks that need doing. I am grateful to have the help and company. Volunteers are working on various projects including the property inventory index, photo database, book inventory index and historical reference files. There are even two people doing transcriptions – one of the city foreman's journals and another of Mosey Adams correspondence. Every little bit each person completes adds to our archives.

Toonie Tree

Christmas celebrations at the museum were curtailed this year due to the pandemic but the Toonie Tree was still a success. We raised \$126 and the winner of half that amount was museum member Greg Wiebe. Greg donated his winnings back to the museum and we thank him for his generous donation.

Donations

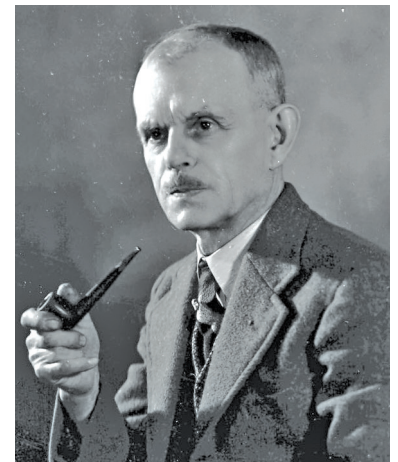
The museum is very grateful for the generous donations made this year in memory of Art Salt, Eleanor Skyrme, Jim McQueen, Eleanore Bolton and Valerie Yells. Other generous donors in 2020 include Sandra Farynuk, Marie Stickland, Elinor Hagardt, Cleo Jones, Dallas Flann, Bob and Joan Cowan, Dr. R.A. Speers, Marilyn Goodfellow, George Malpass and Joyce Elaine Carson.



Museum notes

Meeres provides a pictorial history

The Enderby Museum is home to almost 800 photographs taken by George Albert Meeres as well as correspondence and some artwork. The bulk of the photos were donated to the museum in 1988 by Brian Wilson. He had purchased a collection of Meeres' photographs from an Armstrong resident, kept what appealed to him and donated the remaining photographs and negatives to our museum. Photographs



of the local area and people were kept and those from other communities were donated to those community's archives.

Meeres' photos are a slice of life from his time as a professional photographer, a career that spanned over 40 years – from 1924 to 1968. There are spectacular landscapes, formal portraits and everyday scenes. While some photos are staged, each one demonstrates his consummate photographic talents and tells a story of the era. Born in Grimsby, England in 1878, George Meeres took an artistic path early. He attended the Grimsby School of Art and the Hull School of Art prior to immigrating to Canada in 1906. Among the documents he brought with him to secure employment was a letter from The Wesley Guild in Leeds dated Sept. 22, 1904. The young Meeres had earned second prize in the organization's spring competition for his essay and two etchings of English scenery.

Meeres started his first business in Canada in 1910 with Arthur Lawrence, purchasing a photo studio in Binscarth, Manitoba. The Lawrence and Meeres Photo Studio had offices in Rosburn, Russell, Binscarth and Birtle where they specialized in custom greeting cards, postcards and photographs for seven years. Meeres continued with his own business in Russell and Birtle until moving to Nelson in 1924.

Meeres bought the Campbell Art Gallery in Nelson from E.J. Campbell in 1924 and established a name for himself with his large format photos of Doukhobor settlements, annual old-timers' meetings and downtown businesses. Records in the Nelson Museum include the story that Meeres was forced to leave Nelson after an affair with another man's wife. He ended up in Mara where he purchased the general store in Mara in 1936. He built a small photo lab at the rear of the store while running the store and selling photos of local people and places.

AGM and Heritage Week

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the museum's regularly planned events.

The annual general meeting in November coincided with the implementation of stricter restrictions on gatherings, resulting in the cancellation of the meeting. The initial plan was to reschedule the meeting for mid-February when we could hold it in conjunction with Heritage Week celebrations.

Alas, there will be no celebration of Heritage Week at Piccadilly Mall in Salmon Arm this year. We will host our AGM on March 19 at 3 p.m. at the museum with just reports and no speakers.

As for Heritage Week from Feb. 15-21, the museum will mark the occasion with a series of Facebook posts. This year's theme is "Where do you find heritage?" The idea is that heritage is everywhere – in photos, buildings, stories, people and places – you just have to look for it. Administrator Jackie Pearase thinks there is a story behind every object, photo, place and person – stories that help people better understand their heritage.

So, we are digging out some historical highlights from two scrapbooks created by Mrs. Ethna Revel and presented to the city in 1980. Those topics will then be expanded on using quotes from the museum's oral history project to be posted on social media with appropriate photos. Perhaps people's curiosity will be piqued and they will visit the museum to learn more about local history.

Meeres moved to Vernon in 1939 and took over the Ribelin Photo Studio from William Ribelin. The Meeres Photographic & Art Studio operated until 1968, specializing in portrait photography, photo finishing and copying, photo framing and hand colouring. His motto was "a good photograph or none." Mrs. Mabel Wigg and her daughter Gladys worked for Meeres. Mabel took orders and organized the studio. Gladys learned how to develop, print, take and tint photos under Meeres' tutelage.

Photo orders and portraits were done on the ground floor while developing and printing were done in the basement. The studio also had living quarters for the Wiggs under the photo studio and for Meeres at the back of the building by the furnace, which he tended.

Meeres was an accomplished watercolour artist and enjoyed playing the organ, singing in the church choir and writing poetry. In addition to photographs by Meeres, the Enderby Museum has several pieces of his artwork: pencil drawings "In September, Manitoba" from 1920 and "Shuswap River at Enderby" done in 1943; and watercolours "The Stream Runs Fast" (undated) and "Hills of Home" from 1941. Meeres would often write a title on his photos with his name and the place he was working from at the time – Mara or Vernon.

Meeres died on February 1, 1972 in Vernon at the age of 94. He is buried in the Pleasant Valley Cemetery in Vernon.

Mara's New Storekeeper

The Commoner, November 19, 1936

Mara folk are meeting their new storekeeper this month – and they like him. Owing to illness, Mr. Harry Tomkinson concluded to dispose of the stores at Grindrod and Mara. The store at Grindrod was taken over by his brother, Mr. Arthur Tomkinson, and Mr. G. Meeres, of Nelson, purchased the business at Mara. This is one of the oldest store businesses in the Okanagan. In taking it over Mr. Meeres is intent upon making Mara his home. He knows the Okanagan Valley is developing on a sound basis, and is here to develop with Mara District, one the best in the Okanagan.

Mr. Meeres is employing Chris Klit in the store to enable him to cover the district and get acquainted. He believes Mara district is one of the finest he has been in in the province and hopes to grow up with it.

The Mara Store



The interior of the Mara Store under the ownership of George Meeres. Shown are (l-r) store manager Chris Klit, Albert Zettergreen, Art Witala, Ole Witala, George Stevenson and Keith Davy. [edms #002]

Local grocery shopping for today's Mara residents means a trip to the Mara Foodliner on the highway but there was a time when the local grocery store was at 11 Rosemond Lake Road, next to the bridge and across from where the hall is today.

Sometime before 1898 the first general store was built on the site. Samuel D. Hine and his wife came from England in 1909 and purchased three acres with a house and orchard from William Witala. The built a new Mara Store on the west side of the bridge and a large home that served as Mara's unofficial hotel for travelers coming by road, rail or river. Hines sold the business to George and Olive Butterworth in 1917, who passed it along to the Fords from the coast in 1929.

James Bruzzi purchased approximately 2.5 acres with the store, house and outbuildings some time in the early 1930s. He leased the store to several people before his death in 1947. Many newspaper articles during this time report of people purchasing the store but it is more likely they were buying the business and not the buildings/property as is reported in a 1930 article: "The Duncan Bros. purchased the stock and trade of the A.C. Ford Store at Mara. E.C. Wheeler will have charge of the store," Harry Tomkinson rented the house and store when Wheeler moved to Malakwa in 1934. He built an engine room onto the store building, which provided electricity to the store, house and a refrigerator plant for the store. George Meeres was next on scene, adding a photo studio to the mix during his time from 1936-39. Alice Robertson coaxed her husband Bob from Lumby

The following is an original letter, donated by John Freeman, written by Alice Robertson, who operated the store with Husband Bob from 1943-39.

Mara, BC

March 28, 1942

McLennan, McFeely & Prior Limited,
Vancouver, BC

Dear Sirs:

After some little cogitation, I have decided to put this affair of the barbed wire to you in a man to man fashion. I don't know whether it is you, or me, or both of us who are crazy, all I know is that henceforth I shall be very careful about mentioning barbed wire above a whisper.

We never stock barbed wire. We dislike having it around. It is nasty stuff which reaches out and tears your clothes and sometimes absent minded customers sit on it, causing trouble for everyone concerned. So we do not keep it here if we can help it. About once a year or so a customer comes in and asks for barbed wire and we get it in for them. This year, the first customer came in, and I ordered the barbed wire for him and it arrived safely, without incident. Then his next door neighbour (having seen that roll and it having tickled his fancy, no doubt) came in and requested that I order him a spool.

As I had Mr. L.J. Smith's card to hand, I waited and ordered the barbed wire from him along with a few more small articles. Since that date, gentlemen, a soldier in the battlefield is not more entangled in barbed wire than I. The freight bill arrived – one spool – everything looked fine. Then, the invoice, two spools – I wrote on it explaining that I had ordered but one and the freight bill agreed with me, but ere it was posted I discovered, to my amazement, not one or two, but three spools reposing in the freight shed.

to clerk for Meeres in 1938. They stayed to run the store after Meeres departed, purchasing the stock for \$500 and paying \$40 per month in 1939. The Robertsons left in 1943 when Bob got work with the CNR and Alice's mother Muriel Macready of Summerland took the store over with her daughter Rose Macready.

Chris Peterson of Ontario was operating the store in late 1944. Bruzzi then entered into a five-year lease with Jack Keswick for \$30 per month in May 1946. Keswick upgraded the store in 1947 with a cement floor before selling the business to John (Jack) Cross of Silverdale, BC. Cross purchased the property from the Bruzzi estate after Bruzzi's death in 1947. An addition built in 1952 served as a post office.

Cliff and Eva Marshall from Foothills, AB bought the property in 1953 and operated the store for 15 years, the longest of any proprietor. A branch of the Okanagan Regional Library was added in 1954. The couple sold the stock to John and Greta Stadnyk in 1968 but retained the property. The Stadnyks also purchased the Kenyon property on Hwy. 97A where they constructed a new store, the Mara Foodliner. "When the Foodliner opened we continued to offer Marshall's free delivery service, even for a spool of thread or a quart of milk to be left in a mailbox. Campers at local resorts did not have the convenience of fridges, so we hauled many tons of ice to sell to them. Customers would go down to our spray-free garden and pick their own corn and other veggies," recalled Greta in 2008.

Subsequent store owners included Cornelius and Olga Sawatsky, Thurlow, Curtsinger and Dave Scrivens. The store took a modern turn when Rae and Esther Wallis took over in 1983. They added a liquor outlet, coffee shop, gas bar and propane sales along with the groceries and dry goods. The post office moved next door. Lou and Bob Michaud and Mike and Flo Andrushka were two of several owners before Terri and Trevor Stocks bought the store in 1996. Changes under the Stocks' ownership included public washrooms, environmental clean-up, landscaping, an improved coffee shop and space for an antique shop. They also added a fruit stand when the Aylards closed their market and turned the little restaurant into cold storage.

The Stocks sold to Brad DeMille in 2008 after Trevor developed health issues. Brad added more fresh fruits and vegetables, frozen foods and local wines, and changed the name to DeMille's Mara Market & Foodliner. Jill and Cam Bos changed the name back to the Mara Foodliner when they purchased the store in 2003. Thomas Hawkins ran the store from 2017-2020. The current owner is Jay Heher, who came from Nanaimo and purchased the store Oct. 23, 2020.

So turning the invoice over I wrote a note begging you to sort the thing out and, if possible, relieve me of the two extra spools. I have already ripped my slacks upon them twice, my small son has torn his knee, and innumerable customers are developing vocabularies which are remarkable even in these parts.

However, you replied coldly to my initial plea (evidently having overlooked the notation on the back) that you had shipped two spools, evidently under the impression that I was trying to get two for the price of one. So yesterday I returned your letter with a notation stating the true state of affairs. "At last," I said to myself, "the matter will be cleared up, Doubtless they will instruct me to take it to Mc & Mc Vernon."

But today, in the mail, I once again have an invoice saying: 1 roll Barbed Wire - \$4.20. It hasn't arrived yet, but I know that the accursed stuff is only too likely already making determined progress via C.P.R. to the local shed. This will make three spools which I didn't want, never ordered, and wish to rid of.

Please, gentleman, take pity on a poor lone storekeeper and send no more barbed wire. I have had enough and more. I have heard of different kinds of hoodoos and curses, but this barbed wire visitation is the worst I ever encountered. You seem to be labouring under the delusion that I desire a spool of barbed wire with every freight order. It is far from being the case. I hate the stuff.

Hoping this letter will help clarify the affair,

Sincerely yours,
Mara Store,
Per. A. Robertson