



Kickoff to Christmas is an evening of shopping and socializing. This event, spearheaded by the Avonlea & District Museum Board, will take place on Thurs. Dec. 1, from 6 to 9 p.m. The museum will be open for your viewing pleasure, and a photographer will be available for on the spot "past-time" photos. Stop in for a sing-song at the Coteau Range Manor and supper at the rink. Nelson Motors, the

Avonlea Coop, Prairie Gun Traders, Scully's Ag Foods, Denise Mohr Mary Kay, Jacqueline Jean-Marie Avon, and possibly others, are opening their doors for shopping. Visit the Drop Inn and check out Southern Prairie Railway, Avonlea Massage and Wellness, Expedia Cruise ship Center, and Forever Memories Children Photography

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Tables are available at the Drop Inn for display purposes or selling your home-based business products (sellers will pay a fee of \$20/table with proceeds going to the Friendly Neighbours). If your business or organization wants to be involved, give Darlene Watson (868-2171) or Joyce Holland (868-2229) a call. Also, we want artificial Christmas trees to decorate the museum; give Joyce Holland a call if you can help us out.

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Need a stocking stuffer? Why not purchase a 2012 family membership for your grandchildren. They could show their parents what an interesting place the Museum is!

November 2011

Issue 31, Volume 2

Heritage House Happenings

Avonlea Heritage Museum, Box 401, Avonlea SK S0H0C0 Phone: 868-2101, www.avonleamuseum.ca

Become a Friend of the Museum

2012

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\$15 individual

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Friends also have the chance to participate in development of museum exhibits and the fun of volunteering at museum events.

2011 Memberships numbered 30 family, and 27 single. Help us increase that number for 2012, get your membership by December 31, 2011 and be entered to win an early bird prize basket.



MUSEUM BOARD MEETS
THE THIRD MONDAY OF
THE MONTH



this issue

School Partnership, Displays **P.2-3**

Tea for Three, Collections **P.4-5**

Dino Days, Town of Terror **P.6-7**

Southern Prairie Rail Way, Roast & Toast **P.8-9**

Summer Student, Financial Update **P.10-11**

Kickoff to Christmas **P.12**

Summing Up Summer

1700 Visitors

15 School and Bus Tours

FIVE Hot Dog / Hamburger Days

Four Dino Kids Days

Three Summer Teas

Two Movie afternoons

One RSM Traveling Dinosaur Exhibit

The museum also held a St. Patrick's Day stew supper, a steak night, a bridge tournament, a garage sale, hosted an evening of roasting and toasting, catered several meals, worked hot dog days at Sobey's held raffles, sold 50-50's in an effort to pay down its loan. Thanks to the amazing community support we have reduced the loan by \$10,000!



Learning to count is not always as important as learning what counts.



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Partnership signing
Avonlea School Principal Brent
Lothian, Museum President
Richard Geisler

School Tours

This summer marked the beginning of an official partnership between our museum and our school. A number of classes from Prairie South School Division were treated to a day off classes to learn some history on a true "field" trip.

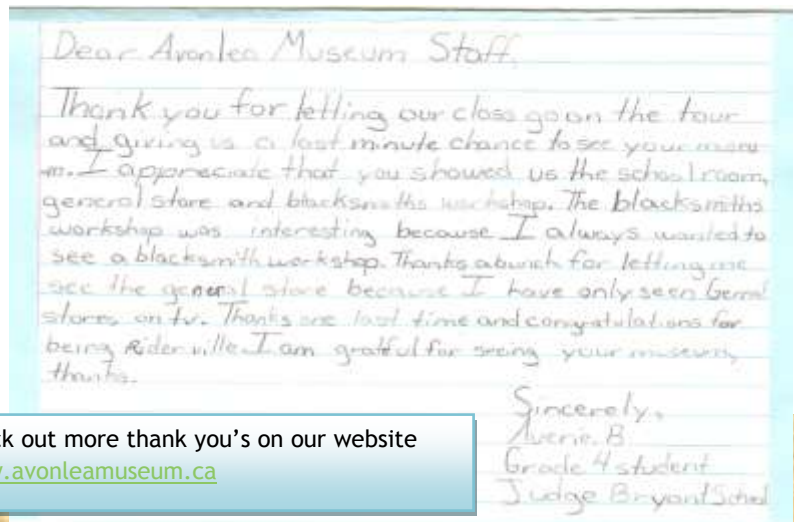
First we visited the Ridgway Man Effigy and experienced the sights, sounds and smells of the prairie. The students were very appreciative

of everything they learned about the great outdoors, from catching a frog, to holding a katydid, to smelling sage, to stepping in cow pies.

We returned to the museum for a tour where classes were divided into groups of 8-10 and led by museum volunteers and staff. Here, they learned about pioneer life and have a greater appreciation for all our modern conveniences. Groups that didn't make it to the hills due to rain had extended tours and also learned from an Archeo Kit supplied by the Saskatchewan Archaeological Society and buffalo kits from Prairie South School Division. Students ate their lunches at the picnic tables and used washroom facilities before heading for the hills again.

Most of the buses drove to the Claybank Ceremonial Circle but one day, the road was too soft and students walked the last half mile straight up. Everyone appreciated the view from this high point and learned of the possible uses of the circle in past millennia. We walked over to see tepee rings before boarding the bus. Then it was back to class!

All together, students and supervisors from King George, Cornerstone Christian, Mortlach, Prince Arthur, Sunningdale, Empire, Westmount and Avonlea Schools totalled 323.



Check out more thank you's on our website
www.avonleamuseum.ca

Main Street Construction

Richard, Cathy, Shawn and Sandi began this summer's construction in the Pioneer Display Building with the framing of the upstairs of the store fronts. Garry helped apply the salvaged siding and trim, and Sandi, Tori and Cathy began painting. Windows and doors were installed room-by-room by Richard. Cathy and Ryan braved the bees at a farm near Ogema to pick up cedar shingles for the Dr. office. Leo Jelinski donated galvanized siding similar to what was on McRories store and it was applied to the business office and painted. Hopefully it looks the way it might have been in the early days. Next year's agenda will include the sidewalk/street portion adding hitching posts, telegraph lines, etc. and improving the flow of visitors touring our museum.

My experience working at the museum this summer taught me a lot about early and pre historic life in Avonlea. Working at the museum this summer consisted of Dino Days, tours, and building the Main Street Display. We also had over 400 items to catalogue from Vera Donison! Giving tours was the most interesting part of the job. Whether you had people from the community or else where everyone was amazed by all the hard work that our small town has put into the museum. Dino Days were always a hit for the kids and staff. We had tons of fun this summer digging for dinosaurs in the sand and doing many other activities. The Main Street Display is finally finished after two months of hard work. After all the scraping, painting, puttying, and sawing everything paid off. I would encourage everyone to come out and see this new display next June. We also hosted the Mad Hatter Tea and the All Dolled Up Tea this summer. It was good to see how much of the community showed up. I greatly enjoyed working at the museum; it's incredible to learn about how things have changed over the years. If you are looking for a summer job next year I would highly recommend working here, it's a great chance to meet new people, learn about our town, and develop public speaking skills.

Tori Schick, summer student



Richard Geisler applying tin siding



Tori Schick turned out to be an expert painter



Tea For Three



Sadly Veronica Schikowski, age 103, passed away this summer. We'll miss her sharp mind and wealth of knowledge.

This past summer, we hosted three teas in the middle of *Main Street* at the Museum. Our first featured guest of honour, Veronica Schikowski, treated us all to some photos from her album. Veronica and her daughter Jeannette Gabel of Moose Jaw visited with many friends and enjoyed tea and dainties.



Our second tea featured Vera Donison as the "Mad Hatter". Vera and daughter, Jennifer, braved flooded roads to bring about fifty of Vera's colourful hats to display - not her entire collection. Many visitors and staff tea servers wore hats in the spirit of the Royal Visit and Vera answered many questions about hats and her collection.

For our last tea, we were honoured to have Julia Kincaid show us her precious doll collection. Her dolls graced the front of the General Store on Main Street where visitors admired the fine craftsmanship. Julia shared with me that she had earned over \$1000 one year making doll clothes for people. That's quite a feat!



The Museum would like to acknowledge and thank all donors whose artifacts were catalogued this past summer: Mavis Leakey, Ron Sanderson, Bernice Sanderson, Betty & Irvin Gordon, Jerry Duke, Don & Lynn Robertson, Sharon Nelson, Vera Donison, Carrie Rossler, Dolores Russell, Vivian Wakelam, Eric Rankin, Jean Kincaid, RM of Elmsthorpe, Bill & Annamae Nelson, Avonlea Insurance, Art Enns, Richard Geisler. Special thanks to Vera Donison for donating 542+ artifacts in wonderful condition. Spring flooding and a family of skunks spurred Vera to clean up some stored items. A great collection of license plates, records, farming, and household items were catalogued.

Of particular interest were the two ornate cash registers from Truax. Jerry Duke acquired them from the General Store and Davis's Hardware in 1955 and stored them until donating them to the Museum this past summer. They certainly fit well in our Main Street!

One cash register was used in the Lechinsky's General Store. According to Irving Lechinsky of Regina, the cash register was in the



store when he and twin Allan Lechinsky were born 82 years ago. Their father Louis Lechinsky who was born in Kerson, Russia, came to Truax from Winnipeg around 1922 and partnered with Slopin Zapurski and Sam Tov in the Truax Supply Co. General Store. Louis eventually took over the store and ran it until they moved to Regina in 1944. The store was originally built by Craig & Cummins in 1912; purchased by John Klein 1914-17 when it was sold to Slopin and Tov. Allan & Irving Lechinsky were the last ones to run the store until it closed down in 1955. Prior to settling in Regina, Irving was a 2nd Lieutenant in the Princess Patricia Light Infantry in Calgary. The cash Register was a significant part of Truax history as was the other 'till' donated. It was originally from the Davis Hardware store in Truax. E.J. (Edward) Davis, born in London, England, came to Canada to farm in 1906 and settled in the Truax area. About 1920 he moved into Truax to take over the hardware business which his son Reg Davis later took over and managed until his death in 1981. Edward was very interested in politics and local government and served as councillor for 6 years. Reg was an expert radio and repairman and 'always fixed whatever needed fixing, whatever time of day'.

Our trip out to Avonlea was wonderful. The grade six students were quite excited and said it was the best trip they had ever been on. Thanks again. Marquita Neufeld, teacher Prairie South School Division

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Dino Days

Scotty is now gone but not forgotten. He was the main attraction of the four Dino day attended 100 children from the ages of 1 ½ to 12 years. Activities included T-shirt painting, 3-D dino puzzles, dino digs, games, and movies. Although the T-Rex left a smaller foot print than most thought, its stride was 15' and was thought to run at a speed of 24 K/hr. Thank-you's go to the mom's who helped out, and especially Kim who brought her day care kids to all four dino days and helped out with crafts and took lots of pictures. Thanks to our summer staff for riding herd on the little dino kids and managing to conduct tours at the same time.



TOWN OF TERROR

Blood-curdling screams, macabre laughter, eerie music - not the sounds normally associated with the Avonlea Heritage Museum. Things were different on the Saturday night before Halloween when the Museum was transformed into the "Town of Terror". Victims, er, visitors were led by hideous guides on a tour starting in the haunted "cemetery" and then over to the Museum's Main Street where all manner of ghouls inhabited the various shops and businesses. The bloody barber offered shaves and haircuts (no one volunteered!). Mary, the insane grocer, served delicious(?) finger food and (human?) kidney pie. Visitors could sell their souls and order tombstones with the creepy Undertaker. Surgery was free with the mad Dr. Al Gore. And any failed medical procedures were passed on to Jesse, the demented Blacksmith, for roasting. A dark tunnel led to more horrific sights - torture chambers, tortured souls, and an evil giant spider ready to spin webs around the unsuspecting guests. The tour ended at the lunch counter with a sinister yet generous vampire offering up his favourite drink of blood. The terrified guests were then led to the old train station where friendly faces helped them calm down. Hot chocolate, hot apple cider, and delicious snacks helped to soothe shaken nerves before heading into the dark to the safety of their homes.

Names have been withheld to protect the "innocent"!



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After five long yaers of hard work and dedication Ogema Heritage Railway Association is proud to announce the arrival of their operating division Southern Prairie Railway.

Southern Prairie Railway is the only full sized

tourist train in Saskatchewan. We will be offering a variety of themed train rides from May to October of every year. With the interior of our coach needing to be restored and a full restoration done on the CP baggage coach our start date may be a little later this year.

For this idea to come to be has taken a lot of team work and community support. We have people on our team that give us knowledge into just about every area we have looked into so far. It is also important to note that if Red Coat Road and Rail had not saved this line approximately 12 years ago this could not be happening. All of us would also like to thank Ogema and it people for working so hard to make all of this come true.

Our goal is to team up with surrounding communities and make this an attraction that allows our area to grow and become a highly sought out tourist destination for all of us!

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Welcome aboard!

Cheryl Generous



Tidbits from Elaine's Howse's diary.

May: Election 2011 Conservative majority. Golf course opened 9 holes!! First museum Hot Dog Day ----- Many days of rain!

June: Museum garage Sale, hamburger day. Heavy rains--- golf course flooded, as well as club house, people bailing out basements--- seeding almost at a stand still

July: Truax 100th celebration big success. High temp. most of month

Aug: Eric McRorie 96. Nice crowd for museum season end wiener roast.

Sept: Hotdog day at museum. Cooler weather - frost mid month. Wally Nelson Roast. Harvest winding down.

Oct: Moose on the loose. Cow and calf sauntering down Main Street. Successful H'ween nite at museum. Rainy and cold on 31st.

Nov: First week fairly nice, but snow & icy roads didn't keep everyone from the museum fowl supper. Prov. Election returned the Sask Party in a landslide win!

Avonlea Heritage Museum Present an Evening

Roasting & Toasting

Wally Nelson

Friday September 30, 2011

Long Creek Golf and Country Club

Cocktails 5:30pm - Dinner 6:30pm - Program to Follow



Wally and Doreen Nelson



MC - Bob Hughes



Georgia Joorisity



Sam Richardson



Grant Devine

A life-long resident of Avonlea and district—84 year old Walter Nelson was honored Friday evening, Sept. 30th at the Long Creek Golf & Country Club three miles East of Avonlea. Friends, relatives and business associates gathered for a delicious roast beef meal and social time to voice their tributes and stories about a person who has accomplished much and contributed much to the wellbeing of Avonlea. Among those toasting and roasting were members of his family—Janet and Bill and grandchildren, Curtis, Michael, Damon, Regan & Nadine Nelson, Rod and Tracey Day. Longtime associate and friend, Bob Hughes (former Leader Post writer) was Master of Ceremonies. Other ‘toasts and roasts’ were given by Georgia Joorisity, Sam Richardson, Grant Devine, and Joan Hansen who played and sang a tribute to Wally. Many stories came out involving farming, being a mechanic, then business owner and John Deere and General Motors franchises dealer at age 31. He served on the Village council for 15 years, 6 as Councilor and for 9 years as Mayor of Avonlea. A different venue and one that benefits everyone in the community was the vision of a golf course in the Long Creek valley east of Avonlea that came to be in the eighties, first 9 holes, then 18 with grass greens and a beautiful clubhouse, restaurant and pro-shop. He continues to collect antiques and spends his retirement days going to auctions and sorting ‘his stuff’. Not all tributes went to Wally as his wife Doreen had much to do with his success in life.

The Avonlea Heritage Museum was pleased to sponsor this event and provided tax-free receipts for donations received along with the dinner tickets. It was a great evening enjoyed by all in the pleasant atmosphere of the Long Creek Clubhouse.

Thank you Jan and Doug for all your help and donations.



Joan Hansen



Jan Day

*Guest of Honour
Wally Nelson*



Bill Nelson



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The following thoughts are by Sandi Pitura, one of our summer students. Sandi's grandparents are Remo and Louise Forer.

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There is something rewarding about being able to give a tour completely from memory. The ability to interact with people without having to read a script or simply having to say "I don't know" when asked "What's that." Being able to lead a tour without a script may not seem like a big deal, but when the comment you hear most often from people is "I didn't realize the museum was so big" it makes you feel like you actually know something. Now whether you actually do know something or you just think you do can be left up to debate.

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My favourite parts of the museum to talk about are "Avonlea: Before the Plow" and "The Legion Room." I enjoyed watching people's reactions when I opened the door and lead them into "Avonlea: Before the Plow." It is not something people expect to find in a small-town museum. It is impressive enough by its self but then you talk about it and somehow it becomes more impressive once you know what you are looking at. I enjoyed taking people through "The Legion Room" because it means something different for everyone who went through. There were the people who were from the area or at least had a connection to Avonlea who knew people with pictures on the walls. There were the people who had an interest in war history and they were able to tell me things about the artifacts. Then there were always those people who walk around the room with a glazed look on their faces, who could care less about history. Those people who got dragged to the museum by friends or family or they just needed something to do on one of the many rainy days we had this summer, but then you tell them a story, like the one about the socks from Avonlea being given to a soldier from Avonlea, and all of sudden they have an interest in history.



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I enjoyed leading tours but it was not my favourite thing I did this summer. My favourite project, by far, was the Native American projectile point display. It is a great feeling when you hold proof of humans in the Avonlea area 10,000 years ago. Or when you can say this type of arrow head was first found in an archaeological dig near Avonlea. Ancient history is not something found only in Europe or Africa it happened right here in Saskatchewan and the projectile points are proof.

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WIGMORE

I also enjoyed helping to build the "Main Street" display. I could actually use a hammer properly by the time I was done. And I may have complained about never wanting to clean another window in my life but there is something about a window that is so clean you can barely tell it is there that puts a smile on a person's face.

I really enjoyed working at the museum over the summer. I love history and being able to work with and around it made me look forward to going to work every day.

Sandi Pitura

Summary of 2011 Fundraisers:

March 5 th --50/50 draw at Riderville Dinner	\$300
March 17—St Patrick’s Stew Supper	\$487
April 9 th —Steak Night dinner, 50/50 & bar	\$1,638
April 16—Bridge Tournament	\$407
May 13 th —Hot Dog Noon Lunch (Supplies donated by Scully’s Ag Foods).....	\$796
May 21 st —Catered Birthday Dinner	\$402
May 27 th —Beef-on-a-bun noon lunch	\$500
June 06—Garage Sale	\$514
Hamb/Hot Dog Lunch	\$451
Plant Hangar & Quilt (donated by Remo & Louise Forer)	\$200
June 21 st —Federated Co-op District lunch	\$356
June 24 th —Hamb/Hot Dog noon lunch	\$363
June 25 th —Strawberry Social	\$183
June 28 th —Saskatchewan Nature Conference beef-on-a-bun	\$220
July 7 th —Mad Hatter’s	\$258
August 5 th —Doll Display Tea	\$120
August 7 th —Hot Dog day at Sobey’s – Regina.....	\$258
Sept. 2 nd —Hamb/Hot Dog noon lunch	\$378
Sept. 9 th —Hamb/Hot Dog noon lunch.....	\$321
Sept.30 th —Wally Nelson Roasting & Toasting.....	\$6412
October 1 st —Hot Dog Day at Sobey’s, Regina	\$355
October 29 th —Halloween “Town of Terror	\$256
Nov.6 th —Fall Supper in Community Hall – 144 plates	\$1220
2011 included the Raffle Sales	\$423
Nov.6 th – Penny Parade.....	<u>\$388</u>

2011 Total Receipts from fundraisers after expenses.....\$17,198

School Bus Tours & Moose Jaw Housing Authority Tour	\$1,446
Grants: Avonlea Recreation Board	\$875
Sask Culture M.G.P	\$3500
Avonlea Community (Lions/Riderville)	\$1000
Sask Culture Student Grant	\$1732
Human Resources Summer Careers Student Grant	\$2434
Total Grants.....	\$ 9,541
Personal Donations	\$1,789

With these funds we were able to pay down the Bank Loans by \$10,000, hire a manager, Cathy Geisler and two students, Sandi Pitura and Tori Schick for the summer months at a cost of \$14,946; and hire R.J. Electric to do more wiring and install fluorescent lights in the Display Shed (\$3,220). In addition to the regular maintenance and repair expenses, many dollars were spent on building & painting the Main Street display store fronts. Our present bank loan total is \$17,000.

Summer Raffle was drawn at the fowl supper. Lucky winners were
 Norma Watson - Quilt donated by Heather Mae Thompson
 Ernie Richardson- Framed Photo of the Station donated by Avonlea Heritage Museum
 Susan Pitura - Games Table donated by Ray and Mavis Leakey

Sympathy is extended to the families of the following members of our community who passed away recently: Life Members Marj & Tom Drope, Marion Holland, Mable McRorie former Director Willie Paicu, supporters—Bernice Joorisity, Edgar Duke, Eva Stefan, Helen Jordan, Doreen Cudmore, Verna Enich, Rodger Howse, Clarence Howse, Garry Akins and Bob Ake.

Thanks a Bunch

Did you notice our sharp looking vinyl covered picnic table. No more peeling paint! Material was generously supplied by Tarpro. Garry Hubbard fastened the tarp after repairing the tables.

The Halloween tunnel was built with material donated by the Avonlea Co-op. The creative talents of Michelle Howse were put to good use designing the Town of terror. Scully’s Ag Foods provided 6 large jack-o-lanterns. Thanks to the artistic carvers.

Hot Dog and hamburger days play a big part in our funding and your continuing support is out of this world. Scully Ag foods graciously supplied product for the June Hot Dog day as well as choosing the museum for its Community Awards (\$328.69).

Special ‘Thank you’ to Shawn Geisler for his computer expertise, ticket making and helping out.

Friends of the museum can often be found working tirelessly at yet another fund raiser. Without them the museum would not be able to carrying on. It is so true that many hands make light work.

Happy Holidays from the Avonlea Museum Board

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Richard Geisler | Clarence Johnson |
| Marilyn Keerak | Russ Howse |
| Jean Kincaid | Bernie Sanderson |
| Jim Clarke | Annamae Nelson |
| Joyce Holland | Dode Johnson |
| Betty Jelinski | Garry Hubbard |
| Mavis Leakey | Randi Edmonds |
| Darlene Watson | Wayne Watson |

GIFT SHOP EXPANSION

Need a unique gift idea visit the museum gift shop? We now carry diamond willow walking sticks, hand crafted by Lou Stang, photos by Bill Nelson, stone and iron garden sculptures by Remo Forer, and note cards by local artists.