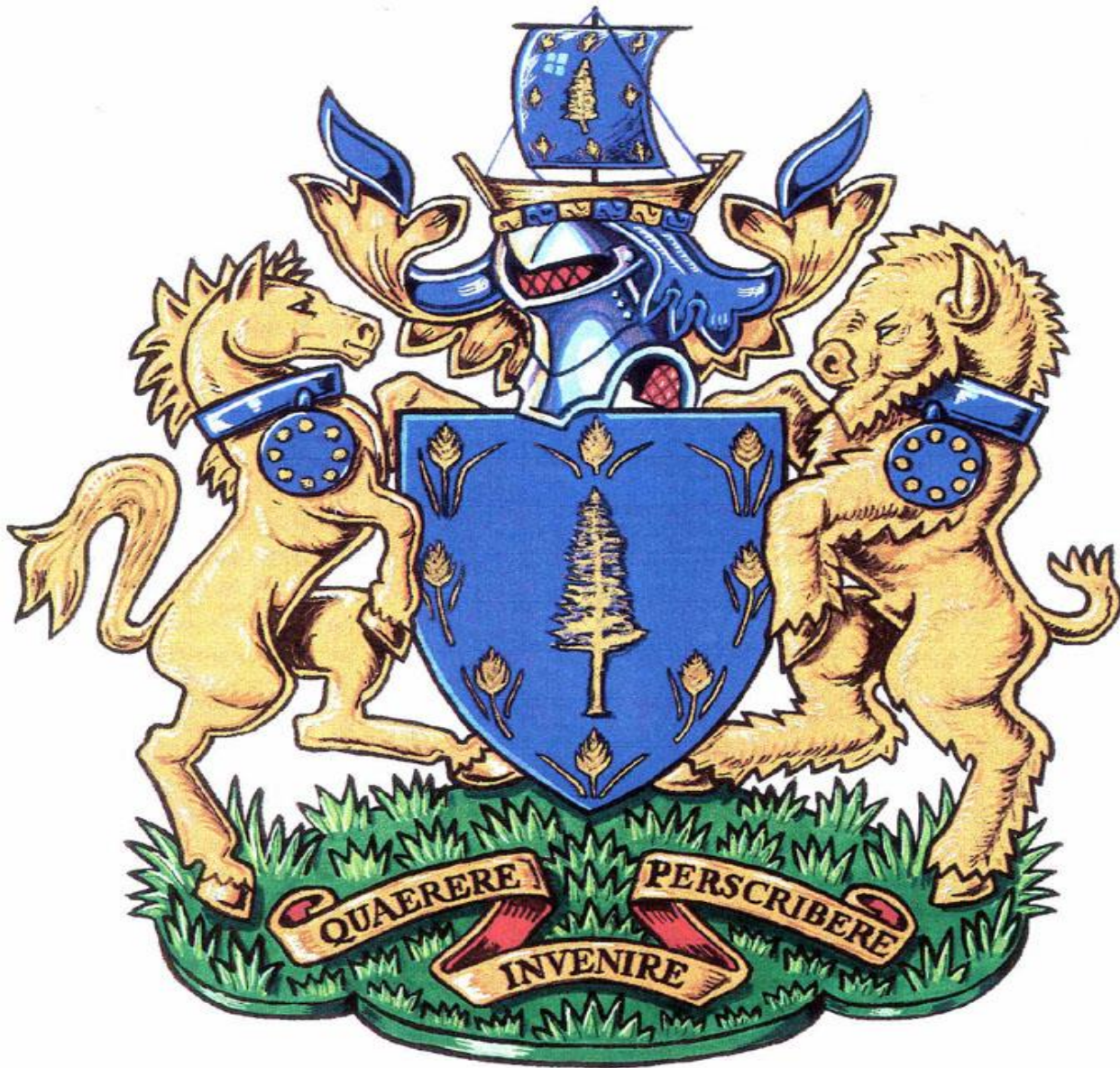


Alberta Genealogical Society



2023 Annual Report

Presented at the Annual General Meeting

27 April 2024

BOARD OF DIRECTORS as of Dec. 31, 2023

Officers

President	Al Bromling
Past President	Lynne Duigou
1 st Vice President	Craig Newman
2 nd Vice President	Diane Wozniak
Treasurer	Carolynne Ross
Secretary of the Society	Ruth McConnell

Directors / Trustee

Brooks	David Clarke
Camrose	Deb Trout
Drayton Valley	Connie Stuhl
Edmonton	Kurt Peterson
Fort McMurray	Tammy Grantham
Grande Prairie	Maxine Maxwell
Lethbridge	Barry Simmonds
Medicine Hat	Don Zimmer
Red Deer	Jessie Dial
Wetaskiwin	Alice Hoyle

Standing Committees

Finance (Chair)	Carolynne Ross
Nominations (Chair)	Lynne Duigou
Policies & Procedures/ Bylaws (Chair)	Al Bromling

Other Committees and Appointments

Alberta Records Name Index (ARNI)	Norma Wolowyk
Archivist & Historian	Norma Wolowyk
Electronic Services	Al Brettneil
EPL Cemetery Digitalization Project	Kurt Paterson
Facilities	Bruce Boelstler
Gaming	Laura Turnbull
Genealogy4Youth	Marion Rex
GenFair 2024	Red Deer
Conference 2023	Al Bromling
Grants & Other Funding	Marion Rex
Legal Advisor	Randy Simpson
Library & Resource Centre	Claudine Nelson
Membership	Lynne Duigou
Publications	Norma Wolowyk
Relatively Speaking	Lynne Duigou
Relatively Speaking Mailing	Terry Terlesky
Research Services	Norma Wolowyk
Retreat	Susan Haga
Social Media	Lianne Kruger
Webmaster(s)	Deb Boelstler

AGS Office

Office Coordinator	Shannon Cherkowski
Bookkeeper	Shirley Keller

OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

The objects of the Society are:

- ✓ To promote the study of genealogy and genealogical research within the Province of Alberta.
- ✓ To encourage adherence to accuracy and thoroughness in research.
- ✓ To encourage and instruct members in ethical principles, scientific methods and effective techniques of genealogical research and defend the standards of genealogy from incompetent and disreputable persons.
- ✓ To assemble a library of genealogical guides, handbooks, reference sources, family and local histories, and other books and materials which may assist the members, all of which will be available to members.
- ✓ To publish such bulletins, booklets, pamphlets, or other documents as may be found desirable and expedient by the Board of the Society and to make the same available to the members and others on such terms and conditions as may be determined by the Board.
- ✓ To establish friendly relations with other genealogical societies for exchange of ideas and information and the promotion of common interests.
- ✓ To enter into arrangements with other genealogical societies for the publication of bulletins, booklets, books, pamphlets, or other documents on such terms and conditions as may be found desirable and expedient by the Board.
- ✓ To promote seminars and workshops on genealogical research and methodology and such other studies as may seem helpful to the members.
- ✓ To provide a centre and suitable meeting place for various activities of the Society and its members by rent or purchase or otherwise.
- ✓ To encourage the establishment of Branches of the Society under such terms and conditions as the Bylaws of the Society may from time to time provide.
- ✓ To achieve the foregoing objects, funds may be raised and donations, gifts, legacies, and bequests accepted.

Registered as a Society 4 April 1973

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Heartfelt
Thanks

Alberta Genealogical Society
gratefully acknowledges the support of the

***Historic Resources Management
Heritage Division***

***For \$29,000 in funding
received through the Government of Alberta.***

The sponsorship received from the Historic Resources Management Heritage Division is applied to expenses incurred for our publications, training programs, and general administration.



Our
Sincere
Gratitude

Alberta Genealogical Society
gratefully acknowledges the support of the

Edmonton Heritage Council

***For \$23,537.10 in funding
received through the City of Edmonton.***

The sponsorship received from EHC helps to provide operational support.



WITH SINCERE THANKS TO OUR DONORS

The Alberta Genealogical Society gratefully acknowledges those who donated \$10.00 or more to AGS and/or its branches in 2023 and agreed to have their donation acknowledged. Your donation helps AGS to fulfill its mission: to promote genealogy and the study of genealogical research in the Province of Alberta

\$501-1,000

Edmonton Community Foundation
Jellyfish Design

\$251-500

Brown, Helen
Hergot, William & Barbara Ann
Rex Howard, Marion
United Way

\$101-\$250

Edgar, Peg
Gosier, F. Janet
Ross,Carolynne

\$76-\$100

Bradley, Judith
Bender, Melvin
Duigou, Lynne
Fowlie, Dawn
Galick, Louis & Helen
Javorsky, Larry
McKelvie, Edna
Nex, Margaret

\$51-\$75

Phipps, Anne
Romanow, Mathew & Patricia
Wasylik, Eugene

\$26-\$50

Borgstede, Arlene
deBruin, Jackie & Rudy
Haisan, Syl
Harasewich, Tillie
Lynch, David
McInall, Margaret
Schutz, Dale
Wolanski, Laurel

\$11-\$25

Evans, Lois & Leonard
Hodgson, Daniel
Nelson, Alora
Philips, Susan
Redford, Marcia
Schwering, Marilyn & Nick
Stolte, Bernadette

\$10

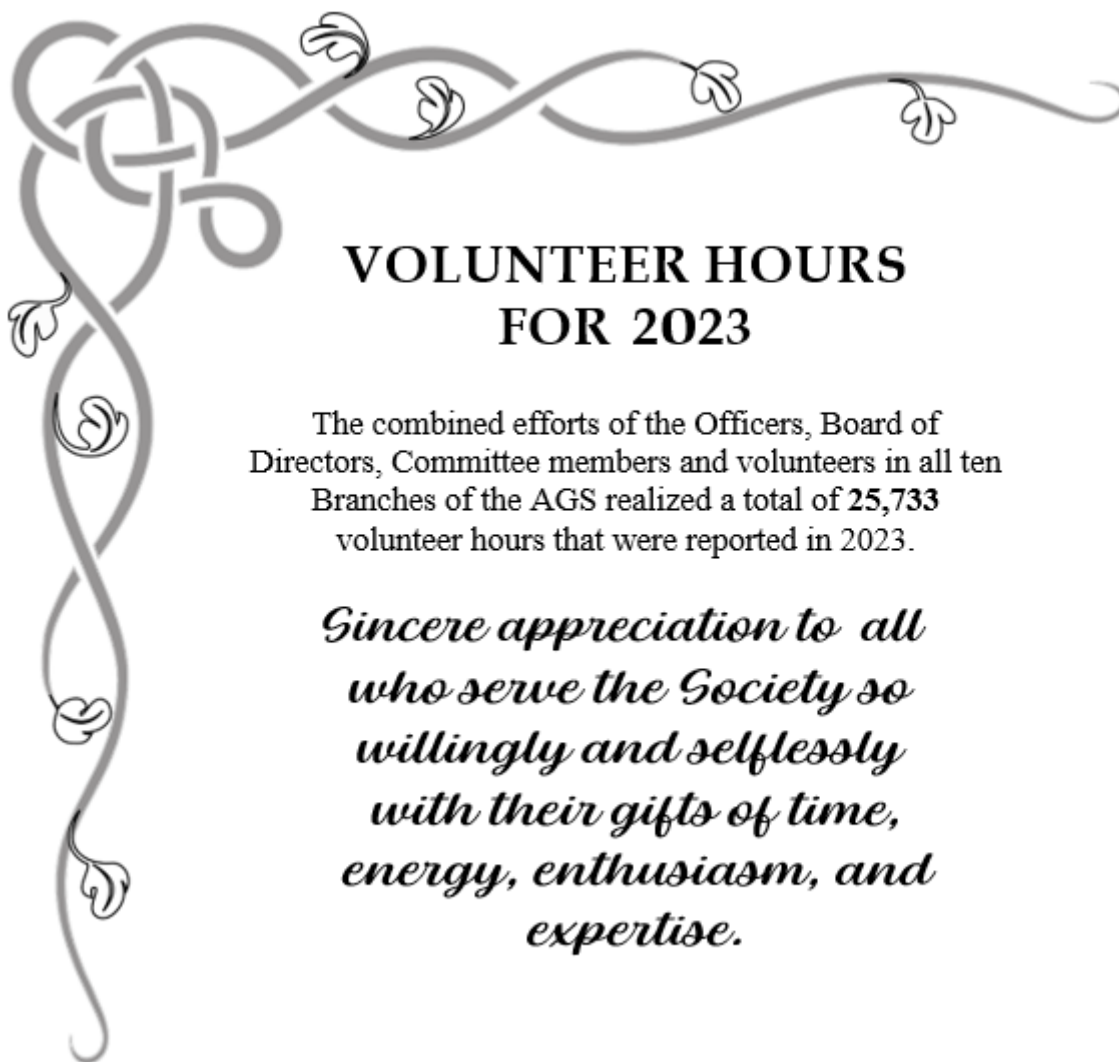
Blyth, Lori & Ken
McNamee, Patricia
Thomas, Elaine
Turnbull, Kathleen

We also give out sincere thanks to 35+ donors who wished to remain anonymous.

WITH SINCERE THANKS FOR DONATIONS IN
MEMORIUM

In Memory of
Sharon
Livingstone
Marlowe, D.

In Memory
of
Francis Easton
Hande, D'Arcy



**VOLUNTEER HOURS
FOR 2023**

The combined efforts of the Officers, Board of Directors, Committee members and volunteers in all ten Branches of the AGS realized a total of **25,733** volunteer hours that were reported in 2023.

*Sincere appreciation to all
who serve the Society so
willingly and selflessly
with their gifts of time,
energy, enthusiasm, and
expertise.*

ALBERTA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
51st Annual General Meeting
3 PM, Saturday, April 27, 2024
Red Deer, Alberta and virtual

AGENDA

1. Welcome, Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement--President Al Bromling

“The Alberta Genealogical Society respectfully acknowledges Alberta’s Indigenous People; on whose traditional territory we gather.”
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of the 50th Annual General Meeting, April 29, 2023
4. Introduction of the Executive Committee and the Directors of the Board
 - a. President - Al Bromling
 - b. 1st Vice President – Craig Newman
 - c. 2nd Vice President – Diane Wozniak
 - d. Treasurer – Carolynne Ross
 - e. Secretary – Ruth McConnell
 - f. Past President – Lynne Duigou
 - g. Directors – Branch Presidents
 - Brooks – David Clarke
 - Calgary – Larry Eldreth
 - Camrose – Deb Trout
 - Drayton Valley – Connie Stuhl
 - Edmonton – Kurt Paterson
 - Fort McMurray – Tammy Grantham
 - Grande Prairie – Maxine Maxwell
 - Lethbridge – Barry Simmonds
 - Medicine Hat – Don Zimmer/Deb Wickham
 - Red Deer – Jessie Dial
 - Wetaskiwin – Alice Hoyle
 - h. Committee Chairs – As listed on the inside cover of this report.
5. Motion to accept the Executive, Branch and Committee Annual Reports
6. Financial Reports – Carolynne Ross (Treasurer)
 - a. 2023 Audited Consolidated Financial Statement for Adoption
 - b. 2023 Compilation Engagement Report(s) for Adoption
 - c. AGS Budget 2024-26 for Adoption
 - d. Appointment of Auditor for 2024
7. Election and Bylaw Results – Lynne Duigou, Past President
8. Introduction of New Executive – Lynne Duigou, Past President
9. Resolution of Respect
10. Courtesy Motions
11. Presentation of Awards
12. Adjournment

ALBERTA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
50th Annual General Meeting – 29th April 2023 - Draft Minutes
Virtual via Zoom

Attendance at the 50th AGS Annual General Meeting:

Sharon Aney	Leslie Ayre-Jaschke	Mel Bender
Marie Birbeck	Lori Blyth	Deb Boelstler
Bruce Boelstler	Al Bromling	Janine Carroll
Gloria Cathcart	Shannon Cherkowski	Sandy Cobb
Mona Dolan	Lynne Duigou	Frank Easton
Hazel Elborne	Dianne Fallow	Kim Farrell
Lynn Fogwill	Bob Franz	Janet Gosior
Timothy Grad	Kit Hrushowy	Jock Howard
Alice Hoyle	Carole Koop	Leroy Koop
Courtney Laframboise	Graham Lowe	Claudia Malloch
Nestor Martinez	Maxine Maxwell	Suzanne Maynard
Doug McLeod	Denise Montour	Claudine Nelson
Bev Oster	Kurt Paterson	Pat Pettitt
Ron Pollock	Marion Rex	Nestor Rosa
Carolynne Ross	Barry Simmonds	Connie Stuhl
Marji Tanner	Blanche Thomson	Ivy Trumpour
Kathleen Turnbull	Laura Turnbull	Helene Unger
Jenny Van Vliet	Katrina Wilson	Linda Winski
Norma Wolowyk	Diane Wozniak	Bob Wright

57 Attendees

1. **Welcome and Call to Order**

The 50th AGS Annual General Meeting was called to order at 9:30am by Al Bromling, President. Al welcomed members to the AGM and read our land acknowledgement.

“The Alberta Genealogical Society respectfully acknowledges Alberta’s Indigenous People, on whose traditional territory we gather”.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

MOVED by Jock Howard that the agenda be accepted as presented in the 2022 Annual Report.

SECONDED by Claudine Nelson **CARRIED**

Jock Howard clarified that under Item 6.c the budget will be adopted.

3. **Approval of the Minutes of the 49th Annual General Meeting – 23rd April 2022**

MOVED by Doug McLeod that the minutes of the 49th Annual General Meeting be accepted as presented in the 2022 Annual Report.

SECONDED by Maxine Maxwell **CARRIED**

4. **Introduction of 2022 Executive Committee and Directors of the Board** by Al Bromling

- a) President – Al Bromling
- b) 1st Vice President – vacant
- c) 2nd Vice President – Dwight Brown
- d) Treasurer – Carolynne Ross

- e) Acting Secretary – Norma Wolowyk
- f) Past President – Lynne Duigou
- g) Directors – Branch Presidents
 - Brooks – Bob Franz
 - Calgary – Susan Haga
 - Camrose – Deb Trout
 - Drayton Valley – Connie Stuhl
 - Edmonton – Kurt Paterson
 - Fort McMurray – Tammy Grantham
 - Grande Prairie – Maxine Maxwell
 - Lethbridge – Marilyn Astle
 - Medicine Hat – Don Zimmer
 - Red Deer – Lauranne Hemmingway
 - Wetaskiwin – Alice Hoyle
- h) Committee Chairs – as listed on inside cover of the 2022 Annual Report

Al Bromling thanked everyone for their contribution and leadership in 2022.

5. **Acceptance of Executive, Branch and Committee 2022 Annual Reports**

MOVED by Bob Franz that the Executive, Branch and Committee reports be accepted as presented in the 2022 Annual Report.

SECONDED by Helene Unger

CARRIED

Leslie Ayre-Jaschke thanked everyone for the reports and noted they show the high level of activity within the Society.

6. **Financial Reports** – Carolynne Ross, Treasurer

Following the presentation and discussion by Carolynne Ross of the 2022 audited statements and the 2023 budget, the following motions were made:

- a) **MOVED** by Carolynne Ross that the Audited AGS Consolidated Financial Statements 2022 showing an income of \$614,488, expenses of \$199,863 and excess of revenue over expenses of \$414,625 be adopted as presented.

SECONDED by Laura Turnbull

CARRIED

- b) **MOVED** by Carolynne Ross that the Compilation Engagement Report for AGS Provincial Office 2022 with an income of \$544,969, expenses of \$127,488 and excess of revenue over expenses of \$417,481 be adopted as presented.

SECONDED by Marion Rex

CARRIED

- c) **MOVED** by Carolynne Ross that the AGS 2023 budget be adopted as presented.

SECONDED by Doug McLeod

CARRIED

- d) **MOVED** by Carolynne Ross, as approved by the AGS Board, that the Finance Committee issue a Request for Proposal before 30 September 2023 for Audit Services, and that the Board based on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, select and contract an Audit Services provider for 2023, with the option of renewal in the years to come.

SECONDED by Doug McLeod

CARRIED

Doug McLeod thanked Carolynne for all the dedication and hard work she contributed during 2022.

7. Election and Bylaw Results – Lynne Duigou

a) **Election Results**

Installed by Acclamation:

- First Vice President, 2023-2024: Craig Newman
- Second Vice President, 2023-2025: Diane Wozniak
- Secretary, 2023-2025: Ruth McConnell

b) **Ballot on Proposed Amendment of Bylaw 7.2 - Dormancy**

Article 7.2 – Dormancy

7.2.1 If any Branch shall fail to have in place an Executive Committee within six months after the time it is required to have its Annual General Meeting the Branch shall be deemed dormant.

7.2.2 If any Branch shall fail to have an Executive Committee in place following the Annual General Meeting, all the previously elected officers of the Branch may continue to act notwithstanding that their terms of office have expired.

7.2.3 If a Branch fails to elect a President and Vice-President at an Annual General Meeting and is in effect without an Executive Committee, the current Branch Executive Committee will nominate a temporary Trustee until such time as a Branch Executive Committee is installed. The AGS Executive or Board will review and ratify the choice of nominee. Any member of the Branch or an alternate member of the Society may be selected as the Trustee. The Trustee will be provided an AGS Executive Terms of Reference including a specific timeline, which may be renewed at the discretion of the AGS Executive. The Trustee will report to the AGS Executive, via the designated Society officer.

7.2.4 The progress of the Branch in installing a Branch Executive Committee must be reviewed every six months by the AGS Board.

7.2.5 During dormancy, the Trustee or an officer of the Branch shall pay all of its legal debts and maintain the operations of the Branch. The Trustee will invite and respect advice from members of the Branch, including suggestions for a new executive, during the dormancy period.

Ballots printed	640
Ballots mailed	637
Ballots hand-delivered	3
Ballots Returned	269 (42%)
Votes YES	261
Votes NO	2
Spoiled Ballots	2
Ballots returned in mail	4
TOTAL	269

MOVED by Lynne Duigou that the ballots be destroyed.

SECONDED by Marilyn Astle

CARRIED

8. **Introduction of Executive** – Lynne Duigou
- a) President – Al Bromling
 - b) 1st Vice President – Craig Newman
 - c) 2nd Vice President – Diane Wozniak
 - d) Treasurer – Carolynne Ross
 - e) Secretary – Ruth McConnell
 - f) Immediate Past President – Lynne Duigou

Al thanked Dwight Brown and Norma Wolowyk, retiring Executive members, for their contribution during the past year.

9. **Resolution of Respect**

WHEREAS:

The success of our Society has been, is, and will be, dependent upon many factors, including dedicated membership, professionalism in our research; the volunteer efforts of individuals who have provided dedicated service on Committees, Boards of Directors, members of Executives, library volunteers, lecturers at educational courses and volunteer efforts in community leadership as well as the support of spouses, and/or partners, therefore:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That members of the **ALBERTA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY** go on record as expressing their deepest sorrow in the passing of the following AGS supporters:

NAME	MEMBER #	BRANCH	DATE
Brian Campbell Foster	#6690	Red Deer	15 Oct 2021
John Polutranko	#4365	Edmonton	22 Nov 2021
Ian George Holmes	#2253	Edmonton	15 Jan 2022
Susan Joyce Kuzmak	#6110	Edmonton	17 Jan 2022
William Dave Thomas	#1447	Edmonton	29 Jan 2022
Joan Alexis Shortt Campbell	#3609	Red Deer	12 Feb 2022
Roseline “Rose” Joa	#953	Red Deer	8 May 2022
Clement (Clem) Albert Nadon	#4590	Edmonton	19 Jul 2022
Maurice Legris	#2837	Drayton Valley	26 Jul 2022
Peter Donald Godschall Johnson	#5915	Edmonton	11 Sep 2022
Margaret Elizabeth (Liz) Kohle	#4914	Edmonton	12 Sep 2022
Margaret (Maggie) Ruth Ballantyne	#6348	Edmonton	13 Oct 2022
Derek Roland Hoyle	#4137	Wetaskiwin	13 Nov 2022
James Eagleson	#120	Calgary	29 Sep 2022
Fay Carlson	#4546	Camrose	16 Jun 2022

And that a copy of this Resolution be made part of the Minutes of this meeting.
Please pause for a moment of silent tribute to their memory

MOVED by Frank Easton **SECONDED** by Laura Turnbull **CARRIED**

Thank you.

10. **Courtesy Motions**

MOVED by Jock Howard that to all who serve the Society so willingly and selflessly with their gifts of time, energy, enthusiasm and expertise, we express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for the combined efforts of the Officers, Board of Directors, Committee members and volunteers in all ten branches of the AGS for contributing 24,550 volunteer hours in 2022.

SECONDED by Connie Stuhl

CARRIED

MOVED by Jock Howard that we express our sincere appreciation for the tremendous support provided by the dedicated, knowledgeable, and experienced AGS support staff: Jackie Pearson (AGS Office Coordinator), and Shirley Keller (AGS Bookkeeper).

SECONDED by Connie Stuhl

CARRIED

11. **Adjournment**

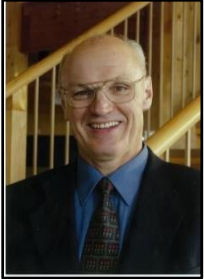
Al Bromling, AGS President declared the 50th Annual General Meeting of the Society adjourned at 11:04am.

Respectively Submitted,

Norma Wolowyk, Acting Secretary

Al Bromling, AGS President

EXECUTIVE REPORTS



President - Al Bromling

Volunteer Hours: 520

In 2023, our Society moved forward on priority initiatives that drive us toward our strategic goals of a strong and healthy organization, excellent research

service, community education, and collaboration. Details of several initiatives are included in other sections of this report. Some highlights are noted here.

At our September meeting, the Board approved a statement to formalize our Society's on ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity: *Our mission states that we strive to be the trusted source of diverse genealogical resources and to provide proven genealogical methods through education, assistance, promotion, resource development and collaboration. We acknowledge and embrace all family histories and stories. We honour genealogical diversity, strive to improve access to more records, and welcome inclusivity and equity in our genealogical research and storytelling.*

During the year, the Longer-Term Investment Committee met five times and presented background documents, risk tolerance assessment tools and recommendations to the Board. These are basis of AGS policy for investment of the Richard (Dick) Nash Endowment funds.

Guidelines for prudent use of Endowment earnings are in place for required Board decisions on these expenditures.

This was the year of our 50th Anniversary and we celebrated with a successful fall conference and publication of "Achieving Gold" which is Volume III of our Society history.

To meet current communication and administration challenges, the Board established the Google Workspace Steering Committee. The operations group has initiated two pilot projects in response to proposals from Edmonton Branch and Grande Prairie Branch.

The joint project with Edmonton Public Library for digitizing Alberta cemetery data has converted a larger portion of texts which are now available on Internet Archives.

Unfortunately, the AGS Fort McMurray Branch became dormant and was officially dissolved after decades of service in the region due to low membership and increased operating costs.

On the upside, our Society welcomed AGS Calgary Branch as our newest member and we are looking forward to growth of membership and activities in Calgary.



Past President Lynne Duigou

Volunteer hours: 869

During the past year I have worked on the following:

Annual Report 2022 was unfinished when the Office Coordinator left April 19, 2023 so I completed inserting the remaining reports, editing, formatting and saw to getting it printed and online for the Annual Meeting April 29, 2023.

Nominations – I secured candidates to fill the positions of 1VP and 2VP and Secretary which were vacant positions on the Executive. Elected by acclamation were 1VP Craig Newman, 2VP Diane Wozniak, Secretary – Ruth McConnell.

Bylaw Changes – I assisted the Policy and Procedures committee to craft and have the Board of Directors pass the recommended bylaw changes to Bylaw 7. I prepared the information on the changes and the ballots required for voting by all members. With the help of the Office Coordinator and the AGS/Edmonton library volunteers the information and 640 ballots were printed, imprinted with the AGS seal, initialed and envelopes stuffed, address labels attached and stamped. I took 637 the envelopes to the post office and mailed them. Three envelopes were hand delivered. 269 were returned and 261 voted yes so changes to Bylaw 7 were passed.

50th Anniversary Conference September 23, 2023 – I worked with Carolynne Ross, AGS Treasurer, Shannon Cherkowski, Office Coordinator, Diane Wozniak, Ruth McConnell, Al Bromling, Marion Rex Howard, Jock Howard, Lou Duigou, Norma Wolowyk, Sharon Dyer, Laura Turnbull and many others to coordinate advertising, registration, speakers, recording, audio/visual, program, hotel, banquet and awards. **See AGS 50th Anniversary Conference Report and Awards for the full report.**

Membership – Please see full report under **Chair Reports.**

Relatively Speaking – Please see full report under **Chair Reports.**

Peter Staveley Award – I recruited a committee of three ladies Helen Unger, Brenda Nugent and Donna Wyatt to judge the four issues in 2022 and choose a winner for the Peter Staveley Memorial Award. They submitted their choice in March for the Awards to be presented at the Conference Banquet in 2023. Lianne Kruger was the winner.

Awards – Please see full report in the **Final Conference Report.**

Kenneth Young Awards – I recruited a committee composed of Connie Stuhl, Drayton Valley, Marilyn Astle, Lethbridge and Edmonton and Wendy Warren, Lethbridge to judge the Branch Newsletters and chose the Best Branch Newsletter, Best Local Content and the Best Original Article.

Website Renewal – **Lynne Duigou** Website renewal began in January and proceeded until June. The committee consisted of myself, Kurt Paterson, Shannon Cherkowski, Deb Boelstler and Raymond Robinson of Media Shaker. The intent was to update and simplify the website and make it as user friendly as possible.

New Branch pages with updated contact information were completed. Conference Pages were prepared and added. Refinements were made in Resources, News and Events, *Relatively Speaking*, Donations, Members only pages, and the AGS store. Text was edited to simplify and clarify meaning.

There was some ongoing training by Raymond with both the Office Coordinator and the Webmaster in order to implement some of the changes. That training has occurred on an as needed basis. More work will need to be done as we use the current website and see areas where reorganization and renewal would be beneficial and where we have received feedback from members. Changes have been well received.

Outreach – I organized a “Treasure Hunt” at the AGS/Edmonton Library for the members of Friendship Force of Edmonton and Area. 19 people attend the April 19, 2023 event. The members spent the after in a search of various topics in the library. With the help of Norma Wolowyk, Claudine Nelson and Deb and Bruce Boelstler they were able to search and find relatives online and in the library books. They quite enjoyed the event and several joined and are now volunteering for AGS.

In March, I spoke to STARTA (St. Albert Retired Teachers Association) at their breakfast Meeting. There were 84 people in attendance. My topic was “I should have asked more questions.” I used a PowerPoint presentation to describe how to start a research project on a relative and what records would be available. I used my Danish grandparents as an example. In September, I gave the same presentation at the *Second Wind Conference* in Edmonton. The group were retired Edmonton teachers.

Genealogy4Youth – My husband, Lou and I assisted Marion Rex to judge posters prepared by the Grade 5 students of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School in Spruce Grove. We had to choose 46 posters from the 151 completed. The posters were then taken to the Art Gallery of Alberta where they were put on display. I assisted with the presentation of certificates of completion at the Gala on Sunday, March 19, 2023. Approximately 250 parents and family members attended as well as the Mayor of Spruce Grove, a School Trustee, St. Thomas Aquinas school personnel, and the Director of Edmonton Heritage Council. My husband took pictures of each student as they were presented with their certificate. We took the pictures to St. Thomas Aquinas school and presented the students with their picture courtesy of Alberta Genealogical Society. Several of the students agreed to write up their project and submit it to *Relatively Speaking* for publication.

1st Vice President Craig Newman



Volunteer hours: 300

I took over as 1st Vice President at the last AGM. There was a lot to learn in a very short time and I hope that I was able to contribute to the meetings and tasks that were given to the Board. In the last year, we tackled many issues but perhaps one of the most visual was the assignment of what to do with the Dick Nash endowment. This took a good deal of work and time by the Board. The main task that I was personally involved with was the revision of the bylaws regarding the dissolution of a branch, this was accomplished with the help of Diane Wozniak, Lynn Duigou and Jock Howard. The revisions of the bylaws have been distributed to the Society to be voted on and adopted at this AGM.

2nd Vice President Diane Wozniak



As 2VP, I assumed the role of Executive Lead of the EPL Cemetery Digitization Project committee, comprising Kurt Paterson, Edmonton Branch President, Susan Waters, AGS Branch library volunteer and Deb Boelstler, Edmonton Branch Library Chair.

Through AGS’s partnership with the Edmonton Public Library (EPL), more than fifty booklets containing information gathered by AGS volunteers from more than 800 Alberta cemeteries were digitized and uploaded to both Internet Archive (IA) and the digital resources on the EPL website. A link to IA was added to the AGS computers in Edmonton Branch and several volunteers were trained to assist members and visitors to access the booklets. In November 2023, an article about the online books at Internet Archive was published in *Relatively Speaking*. On March 21, 2024, the Computers in Genealogy SIG had a presentation on this exciting cemetery sleuthing online resource. It provides access to these valuable genealogical resources from anywhere in the world there is internet access. Work is currently ongoing to develop a hard

launch of the project to continue to spread the word about this valuable asset.

In addition, I co-chaired the Policy and Procedure Committee, along with Craig Newman, 1VP. The Committee also consisted of Lynne Duigou, Immediate Past President, Jock Howard and Shannon Cherkowski, AGS Office Administrator.

After successfully submitting revisions to VI-160 Committee Chair – Library and Resource which were accepted by the Board at its November 2023 meeting, the committee started a review of appointed chairs’ job descriptions in Section 6 of the Operations Manual to determine which positions are outdated and could be amended, updated or eliminated.

Due to two major events that AGS experienced in the past couple of years (an Edmonton Branch Trusteeship and the closure of the Fort McMurray Branch), the committee reviewed the Society Bylaws and in March submitted to the membership for vote the proposed revisions under Definitions, Governance of the Society, Branch Formation and Recognition, Dormancy and Dissolution reflecting the current AGS practice.

Unfortunately, I had to take a short leave from the Executive for a few months and I want to express my appreciation to members of both committees and the Executive for their support during this time.

Treasurer - Carolynne Ross



Volunteer Hours: 493

Audit 2023

The audit was completed for the year 2023 by Louise Chauvet, CPA, CA and her team at KBH Chartered Professional Accountants. KBH prepares a consolidated financial statement, which includes income and expenses for the provincial body and the eleven (11) branches. The AGS Branches audited by

KBH were Edmonton, Medicine Hat and Brooks along with AGS Provincial. The chartered accountants also reviewed the finances of the other eight (8) branches. KBH has prepared an audit report of AGS Consolidated, along with the Compilation Engagements for the AGS Provincial and AGS Edmonton Branch. An excess of \$14,292 was shown for 31 December 2023 for the AGS Provincial. In comparison to the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for 2022, these are the major variances:

Income 2023	\$171,178
Major variances are:	
CEBA Grant	10,000
Richard "Dick" Nash Endowment Fund (moved to Members Equity)	(413,000)
Expense 2023	\$156,886
Major variances are:	
Insufficient cost recovery for AGS Conference	2,414
Higher costs for meetings (AGM-hybrid and September board in person)	1,901
Higher cost for <i>Relatively Speaking</i> (Newsletter)	3,839
Higher Cost for computer equipment and repairs	1,330
Lower cost for website maintenance	(3,962)
Increase in salary and contract cost	5,532
Lower costs for library acquisitions & supplies	(9,087)
Decrease in advertising & promotion	(1,900)
Increase in allocation for Branch support	9,746
Decrease in Edmonton Heritage Council Grant – Operating	3,427

KBH Chartered Professional Accountants has determined that the materiality level for the 2023 audit is \$6,000.00, same as 2022.

The GST and the T3010 Registered Charity Information Returns were filed with Canada Revenue Agency in a timely basis.

Guaranteed Income Certificates (GIC)

The AGS Society continues to have Guaranteed Investment Certificates (both redeemable and non-redeemable) which provide a three-month safety net should our operating budget become compromised.

Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA)

The Canada Emergency Business Account grant of \$40,000 has been invested in a non-redeemable GIC. The amount of \$30,000 is to be paid back to the Government of Canada in January 2024, with AGS keeping \$10,000 plus the interest earned.

Credit Card

The AGS Society now has a Scotiabank Visa credit card.

Request for Proposal for Auditor

A request for proposal for an auditor for the coming year(s) was put together by the AGS Finance Committee and sent out to six (6) firms which included the incumbent, KBH Chartered Accountants. The AGS Finance Committee reviewed the three (3) responses and made the recommendation to the AGS Board that KBH Chartered Accountants be retained as the auditors for the Society.

Casino/Gaming

The AGS Casino/Gaming Chair has submitted this report.

Grants & Other Funding

The Grants & Other Funding Chair has submitted this report.

Richard “Dick” Nash Endowment Fund

AGS received \$413,000 as one of the benefactors of the Richard “Dick” Nash Estate in 2022. This amount was placed in a redeemable GIC and was renewed at higher interest rates throughout 2023. Members of the AGS Finance Committee met with both TD Bank and Scotiabank investor advisors, and this has resulted in a virtual meeting of the AGS Board and the Scotiabank Global Wealth Advisor to be set up in January 2024. A recommendation outlining a proposal for this fund will be made by the AGS Finance Committee to the February 2024 AGS Board Meeting. AGS will receive further monies upon settlement of the estate in the future. The Fund is now recorded under Member’s Equity.

Dissolution of AGS Fort McMurray Branch

In the Spring of 2023, the President of the AGS Fort McMurray Branch informed the AGS Board that the Branch could no longer sustain itself due to the lack

of volunteers for executive positions. It was requested that the Branch be dissolved. The AGS Treasurer set up an Ad Hoc Dissolution Transition Committee: Carolynne Ross, Lead; Tammy Grantham, Co-Lead Fort McMurray Branch; Laura Turnbull, AGS Casino Chair; Claudine Nelson, AGS Library and Resource Centre Chair; Deb Boelstler, AGS Webmaster & Edmonton Branch Library Chair; Bruce Boelstler, AGS & AGS Edmonton Branch Facility Manager; Shirley Keller, Bookkeeper; along with Lynne Duigou and Jock Howard in advisory functions. Due to the size of the physical and financial holdings, it was agreed that all physical holdings of the Branch should be disposed of first and all financial matters closed before the motion for dissolution was put forth. A number of financial and physical donations were made to not-for-profit organizations in Fort McMurray. Library holdings were distributed to the various AGS Branches and other institutions. The remaining financial and other assets were kept by AGS. The Branch officially closed its doors on 31 July 2023 as the lease was not renewed. The motion to dissolve the AGS Fort McMurray Branch was made on 25 November 2023 meeting of the AGS Board.

It is with sadness that we say goodbye to this Branch of the Society. We thank the members for their years of dedication in amassing an amazing amount of genealogical resources, their integral part of the AGS Society, and their willingness and professionalism to help all those who walked through their door.

Research

The AGS Research Chair has submitted this report.

Relatively Speaking Sustainability Fund

The *Relatively Speaking* Editor continues to be funded from the Relatively Speaking Sustainability Fund.

Facility Manager

The position of Facility Manager reports to the AGS Treasurer. Bruce Boelstler holds this position and has performed maintenance to the AGS Office and the AGS Edmonton Branch equipment, completes and maintains the inventories of all holdings for the AGS Office and AGS Edmonton Branch, has updated and maintained the site security codes, installed backup batteries for the computers in the AGS Office, purged

outdated electronics and disposed of them, completed minor carpet repairs, and disposed of non-repairable furniture and equipment.

Along with his team of AGS Edmonton Branch members, he oversaw the arrival of the assets from Fort McMurray, which included the re-arranging of the furniture in the AGS Edmonton Branch site to accommodate the new furnishings and equipment. Thank you for your willingness to serve in this position.

Bookkeeping

Shirley Keller, the AGS Bookkeeper, continues to provide excellent and efficient service to our Society. Not only does she do the bookkeeping for the Society, but she also consolidates all the financial information for the requirements of Revenue Canada; provides information and advice for the Branch Treasurers; maintains an excellent working relationship with our Office Coordinator, Shannon Cherkowski; provides assistance to the Grants & Other Funding Chair, Marion Rex Howard; prepares all financial material for the yearly audit, assists in liaising with the auditors, and continues to provide superb mentorship to the AGS Treasurer.

Finance Committee

Having completed my first term as the AGS Treasurer, I thank the members of the Finance Committee. Norma Wolowyk, our Finance Committee Secretary and the Research Committee Chair; Al Bromling, AGS President, ex Officio; Laura Turnbull, Casino/Gaming Chair; Marion Rex Howard, Grants and Other Funding Chair; Tammy Grantham, Branch Representative; Greg Bounds, Branch Representative and Advisor on accounting management issues; and Claudine Nelson, AGS Library and Resource Centre Chair are the members of the Committee. In September, Tammy Grantham of the AGS Fort McMurray Branch resigned from the Committee. Norma Wolowyk, Greg Bounds and Claudine Nelson have indicated that they will be stepping down at the end of this term. They have contributed much knowledge, many hours and lots of patience to meet the challenges of the financial management of the Society, which has grown through the years. My thanks to each one of you. You will be missed.

Secretary - Norma Wolowyk



Norma was appointed Acting AGS Secretary in April 2022 and carried out a year of service until the 2023 AGM.

Secretary – Ruth McConnell



Volunteer Hours: 112

I was appointed as Secretary after the 2023 AGM in April. All Executive and Board meetings for 2023 have been recorded, approved and sent to the AGS Webmaster to upload to the website. Hard copies were made by

Shannon Cherkowski and filed at the AGS Office.

As Secretary, I attended six Executive and three Board of Director meetings. At those meetings (either in person or on Zoom), I recorded the minutes, compiled them, sent out drafts to the appropriate members, made changes as requested and sent drafts and then, after they were officially approved, the final versions of the minutes were sent to the Webmaster for uploading to the AGS website. I also organized lunch and snacks for two in-person Board meetings.

BRANCH ANNUAL REPORTS

Brooks and District Branch



David Clarke

Volunteer Hours: 525

Membership: 21

January: Jan 04
Hybrid/Executive meeting
Jan 13 – Branch History
10-year report meeting
Lorraine Spence lead
Jan 21 – Presentation

Family History Scotland & England Karyn Norden

Power Point superlative photography

Jan 27 – Strategic Planning Meeting chaired by Henry Najda using the chart from Edmonton which was of great help and appreciated.

February: Feb 6 – Provincial AGS Special Meeting on governance attended by Zoom, Robert Franz

Feb 8 – Brooks & District AGM. Executive presented and approved for 2-year terms. David Clarke – President, Eileen French – VP, Henry Najda – Secretary, Karyn Norden-Treasurer, Robert Franz-Director and Liaison AGS, Glenn Mitchell B & *D Heir Lines* Editor

Feb 8 – Hybrid meeting Lorraine Spence provided an informative power point presentation on **Alberta Record Names Index** and AGS resources from the Edmonton SIG that she attended.

Feb 13 – the Provincial Zoom meeting of Membership Chairs was attended Bob Franz

Feb 17 – A second Strategic Planning Committee chaired by Henry and approved by the subsequent hybrid meeting.

Feb 18 – A Presentation Past President Maurice Landry on **Historic Buildings in Brooks.**

March: March 01 – Hybrid/Executive meeting. Lorraine Spence completed 10-year history detailing the branch activities and milestones.

March 18 – Presentation Genealogy Online #2 **Gems and Junk** from the Great Courses series on Genealogy the Branch purchased last year.

April: April 05 – Hybrid/Exec Tentative program meetings and June outing were decided upon

Apr 22 – A family research sharing session and open house to view the branch library was held members found it valuable, but it drew no visitors. A request was sent in for books offered by Fort McMurray. Sad the branch has closed. It was decided not to participate in Alberta Culture days in September previously attended with little response. Two members attended the AGS- AGM April 29 by Zoom.

May: May 03 – Hybrid/Executive meeting attended purchase new printer. Decided to participate in the Alberta 55+ Summer Games Aug 18 & 19 with open house. Decided to set up a Board table at AGS 50th Anniversary Conference Sep 23
May 27 – Presentation "**My Best Bastard: Family Scandals and How They Help Us**" David Clarke

June: June 03 – AGS Directors meeting Bob Franz. June 06 Hybrid/Executive

June 14 – Outing to the **Blackfoot Crossing Museum**/historical site (Siksika Nation). Twelve members/guests. Traditional hunting/gathering place of Blackfoot Confederacy and site of the signing of Treaty 7.

August: Aug 03 – volunteer schedule determined for the open house. Nominated Bob Franz for the AGS 50th anniversary volunteer award.

August 18 & 19 – Info table at entrance and Library maned during the Alberta 55+ Summer Games hosted by Brooks. Good response and convivial outing.

September: Sep 06 – Hybrid/Executive Gravestone update issues. Mary Jo Arnold and David Clarke visited the Brooks cemetery to photograph new tombstones. Find-A-Grave site contained more information and is better organized than is currently available from our website. Further discussions on best strategies next meeting. Spring issue of our newsletter *B & D Heirlines* printed. Question: are the branches/AGS receiving digital copies? Do they want them?

Sep 23 – **AGS 50th Anniversary Conference** – Edmonton Clara Iwaasa, Karyn Norden, MaryJo Arnold and Bob Franz attended. The Brooks Branch and members received quite a few awards. Outstanding Volunteer Award – Bob Franz, Kenneth Young newsletter Best Local Content – Glenn Michell, President’s Award Bob Franz

Sep 24 – AGS Board meeting Bob Franz attended.

Sep 29 – Set up a table display promoting AGS and the Branch at the Brooks Museum Fall Fair in the Kitchener School building, displays and book sales Clara Iwaasa and Lorraine Spence.

October: Oct 03 – address to Mayor and City Council on Branch and AGS our facilities and services by David Clarke.

Oct 13 – Official proclamation of Family History Week in Brooks, Oct 16-21 by Mayor John Petrie.

Photo-Op at City Hall with Brooks Bulletin reporter large article published Oct. 20

Oct 16-21 – Artifact Display a cabinet of heirlooms from the public arranged at Brooks Public by Lorraine Spence. Additionally, a mailout of simplified module for school groups to work on. Completed results displayed on a wall in Library adjacent to Artifact display.

Oct 04 – Hybrid/Executive meeting discussion of CCVO survey and objections to “woke” agenda, members want an apolitical society.

Oct 18 – Open House and Work Bee to clip obituaries for our reference books and web site.

Oct 21 – Presentation: Castles, Cousins and Ceilidhs. Member Lorraine Spence illustrates her family experience maintaining close connections to Scottish family to the 4th generation.

November: Nov 01 – Hybrid/Executive meeting. Discussion of Challenges survey from Directors Provincial AGS. Consensus on topics easily reached.

Nov 25 – AGS Directors meeting Zoom David Clarke attends as Bob Franz feels his health issues are a hinderance.

December: Christmas Social was held Wed, Dec. 13 at PD’s restaurant with 14 people attending. David and Clara both made congratulatory toasts to honour Eileen French’s 20 years as a branch member, serving in many different capacities. Glenn Michell distributed the Fall Issue of *B & D Heir Lines* to those attending the Christmas meal.

Calgary Branch – Susan Haga and Larry Eldreth



Volunteer Hours: 150
Membership: 7

At our February Board Meeting of 2022 Lynne Duigou, announced that AGS Provincial had received a number of emails from interested AGS members living in Calgary who were interested in forming an AGS Calgary Branch. Since I had just moved to Calgary at the end of March 2022 myself and then a few other AGS members looked into the possibility of forming an AGS Calgary Branch, Lynne Duigou came to Calgary in June 2022. I had arranged for all the interested members, and others interested in forming this Branch to meet at the LDS Willow Park Chapel located on Acadia Drive SW. There were 15 people in attendance plus two other members who joined us by Zoom.

Lynne gave a presentation on AGS on our genealogy focus and on our possible goals for the future. We passed an attendance sheet around collecting people’s names, e-mail addresses, mailing addresses and phone numbers, and AGS membership numbers. We needed 10 individuals interested in putting their names forward to sign their names to a list which would then be sent to AGS Provincial Executive for approval and then sent on to Alberta Registries to form our society. That was sent by the end of the year in December 2022.

Prior to this a number of us were meeting casually at the Calgary Co-Op located at 11595 Rocky Valley Drive NW in a community meeting room upstairs. Shortly thereafter we began meeting in Fairs Fair Bookstore located at 104 – 61st Avenue SW for a couple of months. Soon we began meeting at the Southwood Public Library just off of Southland Drive in Calgary in a small meeting room with internet capability.

Since January 2023, we held a number of presentations at the 8818 Macleod Trail SW Calgary Co-Op in their upstairs community room. I gave the first presentation on “Climbing Over Our Brickwalls”, then in February I gave a presentation on ”Understanding Old Handwriting”. Larry Eldreth, a volunteer with Find a Grave and a new AGS member gave us a presentation in March on all the photos (about 1080) that he had uploaded to Find a Grave. Shortly afterward he left on a long extended trip throughout the U.S. and we booked a presentation with him in October to give us his updated presentation on further photos that he will be uploading to Find a Grave. In April, we gathered together and I gave a presentation on “Finding Females in our Pedigree.”

At the end of May, I had booked David Tyler a past Family History Director from Raymond Alberta to give us a presentation on “Why History is a Vital Research Tool”. In June, Lucas DaSilva a recent graduate of BYU Idaho in Family History who lives in Okotoks gave us his hands on presentation on Familysearch.org; he is one of our newer members. We all brought our laptops and followed along with him in his family history presentation as we searched our family lines together.

We broke for the summer and Lucas Da Silva returned in September and gave us part-two of his earlier presentation on Familysearch.org. Then in October Larry Eldreth, gave us his updated presentation on Find a Grave.

In November, we held a brainstorming session for our monthly meeting as we shared with each other what progress we had made over the summer in our family history research. We didn't hold a meeting in December but will resume our monthly meetings in

January. Our membership is slowly growing and progressing and earlier in the year we received our startup money of \$2500 that AGS received from when Peace River closed down. Our AGS Calgary Branch Executive includes myself Susan Haga as President, Larry Eldreth as our Vice President, Craig Newman as our Treasurer and Catherine Yuill as our Secretary. Once we received our startup money, Craig Newman and I went to the Bank of Montreal and filled out documents starting up our AGS Calgary Branch Bank Account.



Camrose Branch Deb Trout



Volunteer Hours: 795.5
Membership: 25

President Deb Trout
Vice President Janine Carroll
Secretary Lilyon Lundy
Treasurer Alora Nelson
Newsletter Editor Maureen
Scrutton
Membership Wendy Roth

Webmaster / Facebook Deb Trout
Events Cindy Mailer
Board Member at Large Bev Webster
Meetings:

January: Our meeting was on Zoom. We watched Lianne Kruger's 'A Toboggan Ride Through Canadian Records. Eh!'

February: The meeting was intended to be a webinar but due to illness, the meeting was cancelled.
March – Catch up meeting, discussion of brick walls etc.

April – Kurt Paterson presented using SPIN2 via Zoom.

May – We hosted a mini conference based on our SIGs. Talks presented by SIG members were: Writing Your Family History, Researching Military Ancestors, Organizing Your Genealogy, and Transcribing Records. Including the presenters, there were 16 in attendance. Four were non-members of which 3 expressed interests in joining the group. A successful event!!!

June – The group travelled to the Stettler Museum for a tour. The museum arranged for a presentation about Robert Raymond Cook, the last man hanged in Alberta. It was created and presented by the daughter of Cook's defence attorney David McNaughton. A very interesting and thought-provoking talk.

July – We met at the Camrose Valley View Cemetery. We discussed cemeteries we have visited. One of our members spent the summer visiting and cataloguing small town cemeteries and shared some of her adventures

August – We met at the Camrose Railway Museum for our regular meeting. The discussion was around current projects and challenges. It was an outdoor meeting and when a rainstorm rolled in, attendees lined up under the station's overhang to watch it and enjoy the ensuing rainbow.

On the 13th we held our Summer Social for members and their families/friends at the Bashaw Cemetery. President Deb Trout provided a short tour of the oldest section.

President, Deb Trout did a brief family history session for a City of Camrose day camp focused on local history. Most were there for the fun but a number of the children were interested in learning more about their families.

September was our discussion of summer genealogy discoveries. We participated in the Camrose Community Registration Night. Traffic was steady at our display but there are no new members from it so far.

October – We discussed our individual DNA ethnicity. We hosted a Drop In and Chat event at the local library on October 29th from 2:00–3:30. We

had two visitors drop in. We are hoping to be able to continue the Drop In on the last Sunday each month. Our library is in budget talks currently and are unsure if they will have funding to remain open on Sundays. Fingers Crossed.

November – military month with members providing a story about a military ancestor. A lively discussion was held with 12 members attending (3 by Zoom) and 1 guest. The guest is planning to join our group. One member brought in some information about D-Day that she had borrowed from a neighbour. Another discussed an uncle who survived a plane crash in 1945. We learned from our military experts why the bombs on board DID NOT explode. We learned about a Nursing Sister from WWI, a member of the British Forces from India, another uncle from WWI, a couple of cousins from WWI – one who was killed and another who survived, and a couple of uncles from both wars. A very interesting evening. December was our Christmas Social. We brought finger foods to share and held a 'Show and Tell' session.

SIGs: Our three SIGs. Writing Your Family History, Researching Military Ancestors and Organizing Your Genealogy/Tech Assistance are still very active with the possibility of a second Writing Your Family History group in the near future.

Drop in and Chat: The event was created for one Sunday per month at the local library. We had two successful events before the library was forced to close on Sundays due to budget constraints. We are considering another day to host the event as it was successful.

Projects: The Flagstaff Ancestral Heritage Collection. The project is ongoing with a total of 4857 entries to date.

Camrose Booster digitization project – we have the buy-in by the newspaper and they have a room we can use. We are working with AGS to obtain funds to purchase equipment.

We were informed early in the year that our meeting venue, The Camrose Public Library was changing their hours due to budget constraints. We were no

longer able to meet during the week and attempted to meet on Saturday. Finally, we found a new location at the Camrose County Agricultural Services building and were able to return to Thursday meetings – the third Thursday monthly at Our board decided to change our meeting structure. We now meet from March to December. The summer meetings are often held at outdoor venues with the occasional road trip to a museum in place of a regular meeting.

Drayton Valley Branch

Connie Stuhl



Volunteer
Hours:
977.35
Membership:
7



2023 proved to be an interesting year at the Drayton Valley Branch. We met in person when we could, and no longer used Zoom, since many of our members live out of town with unreliable internet service.

In January, we participated in a Family Day event for children with the Drayton Valley Library, where they would draw a tree, then use bingo daubers to mark the leaves. With their parent's help they would label the trees with family members names which for some also included the cat and dog. It was a bitterly cold day so the turnout was not what we had hoped, but enjoyed seeing the kids have fun with the activity. Once they completed the activity, we used a stamp to update the passport they carried around, which also included information for parents on family tree research activities.

Another Youth Genealogy activity was held in April with an escape room. We had 18 participants who all shared they had fun while learning about building a family tree. Their prizes included a sample family tree, a pencil and a dilly bar from Dairy Queen. Even the Library Director took part and said it was a fun activity.

Around 11:30 pm on May 4, Drayton Valley residents received an evacuation order due to a wildfire that had jumped the river and was getting close to town. We spent those days at hotels, with family or friends and stayed glued to the news for updates on when we could go home. We were not able to hold our Branch meeting when we returned as air scrubbers were still in use at the library to remove the smoke.

We tried one other activity, a Treasure Hunt, geared more for adults, but unfortunately, we did not have any participants. The library program manager said that happens with some of her activities as well.

During our Branch meetings, we viewed webinars on various topics such as debunking family tree hints, making sense of all the research you have done, including sessions on the brick walls in our research and reviewed the resources within ARNI, ANI and the Homestead records index located on the AGS website. One of the queries we received was asking for help finding information on an Indigenous veteran. The person requesting does not have a computer so unable to do research on the internet. We contacted Veterans Affairs for him and they were quite happy to supply him with information on his relative. We were also able to connect with the Legion for him and have a military headstone erected for his relative at Enoch Reserve. I am still involved in the Drayton Valley & Area Legacy Project Society with members of other associations in Drayton Valley, to preserve in a digital format, the history of Drayton Valley. We were very excited to learn that the Drayton Valley newspapers would be added to Internet Archive (formerly Peel's Prairie Provinces) by the U of A.



Edmonton Branch Kurt Paterson



Volunteer hours:

2023: 8,901

2022: 12,273

2021: 6,302

Membership:

Oct 1: 2023 382 (+12)

2022: 370 (+24)

2021: 346

In 2023, we attracted 50 new memberships and there were 37 renewals who were not members in 2022. Sadly, 6 of our members passed away during the year. We have 22 life memberships.

Volunteers

Our priority remains to offer strong courses, programs, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and member benefits that help build upon our active volunteer and member engagement, and both broaden and grow our branch and society membership. This will lead to interactions and connections with people who aspire to effectively serve on our committees, our boards, and sustain our society while on the family research journey. A big shout-out to our many dedicated volunteers who contributed over 8,900 hours to our society this year.

2023 in summary

2023 was a very rewarding and successful year for AGS Edmonton members including celebrating AGS's 50th anniversary. It was, however, not free of significant challenges or disappointments.

One of significant activity this year was the amazing work being done on a multi-year marketing, social, communication, and website plan (2023 to 2025) that included the foundational refreshing of our Brand and Visual Identity. As you can see from our branch Treasurer report, we have reserves and we are in a solid financial position.

Some highlights from the last eighteen (18) months include adoption of Google Workspace (GW), increase in understanding and streamlining of the member journey (new and renewal), and "tidying up" of the library space. The initial transition steps to improve social media consisted of the development of a social media framework approved by the Board in September and the on boarding of a social media administrator in the fall. A community partnership with MacEwan U marketing students provided us with three key reports highlighting opportunities and providing recommendations for our society.

A few other achievements include major enhancements to our website including new SIG web pages and updating of the events page, the re-imagining of our branch newsletter, "The Twig" (formerly Clandigger), recruiting a full slate of directors for the 2024 AGM, and filling various vacant SIG leader roles. All very exciting and invigorating!

A major benefit and a primary source of new members is the Tracing Your Family Tree program (which we have operated since the 1970's). Unfortunately, due to volunteer capacity, we were not able to deliver any TYFT courses in 2023 and therefore had a revenue shortfall in this area. Hybrid meetings were tested however these were met with some obstacles and have been sporadic in delivery. Another key challenge has been the continuing decline in Research inquiries over the last few years. The fourth major challenge is attracting volunteers in key roles, like Library volunteerism, SIG leaders or Board positions. All four of these challenges have been identified and are included in our future operational plans. If you have talents that you would like to share in any of these areas, please visit our volunteer page on the Edmonton website; <https://www.edmontongenealogy.ca/volunteer-opportunities>.

More detailed reports are available in the general meeting area of the member only login section of our website.

2024 to 2026 Branch Operational plan

Again, this year, we hosted a series of seven (7) town hall meetings to discuss and get feedback on draft operational plans. The town halls were successful

and significant input was received from participants for the refreshing of the AGS Edmonton Operational Plans. Based on member input, we will be combining the 2 membership plans into one plan and adding a courses, programs and services offered plan in 2024. Our brand and visual identity concept options have received positive feedback from many constituents and we will be presenting the chosen concept at our AGM on February 22, 2024. The implementation phase of this project will continue in 2024. As this is a very large undertaking, it may also continue into 2025. Stay tuned for more information on this great initiative!

The AGS Edmonton board plans to review the 2024 – 2026 AGS Edmonton Operational plans at its March meeting. This will provide the newly elected and appointed Board members an opportunity for additional input, make any changes, and then fully endorse this 2-year work plan.

A great big “Thank you”

As mentioned by others, a special thank you to Jackie Pearson (January to April) and Shannon Cherkowski (May to December), AGS Office Coordinators, and Shirley Keller, AGS Bookkeeper for all they do to support our branch.

And to our dedicated fellow volunteers, thank you for sharing your time and talents while effectively serving on our committees, our boards, assisting member, and sustaining our society. The results this year have been truly amazing. Thank you.

Grande Prairie & District Branch Maxine Maxwell



Volunteer Hours: 796.5
Membership: 41

Meetings and Volunteerism: 2023 Executive Meetings were rescheduled to 1st Wednesdays of the month, with

an expanded Executive Committee of nine members, with the majority of the meetings in-person.

We scheduled two in-person General Meetings in 2023, with limited success. We were quite disappointed with the turnout in September, for the Grande Prairie Cemetery Tour, presented by the CEO of the South Peace Regional Archives, but were a little more encouraged on October 18, with “The Chester Ronning Story” by Charles Taws, which attracted 11 people; 7 members and 4 potential members.

Overall, General Meetings were scheduled for the third Wednesday of most months, the format being modified to notifications and updates of event-scheduling, followed by a Program.

As a result of consistently small turnouts, our in-person programming eventually morphed into email notifications to join speakers and presenters by invitation from other societies via their newsletters or by invitation from other branches. The Executive has been doing significant brainstorming and have some ideas for more hands-on workshops in the coming year. Our biggest challenge remains attracting members who are local, as around half of our members live outside of Grande Prairie. This has had a huge impact on our volunteer base to help with outreach events and activities.

Our hybrid AGM on March 15 attracted 15 members and guests in-person, but only one member by Zoom. Duff Crerar, a popular local speaker, presented a session on “Looking for Roots in All the Wrong Places”, which was well received by those in attendance.

Thankfully, all of us on the existing Executive agreed to stay on for another term, as we had no one else stepping forward.

We sponsored one virtual event, Ellen Thompson-Jennings presenting her “Leeds Method of Organizing your DNA” in November to our GP & District membership only, via Zoom.

For the September and November Branch Board Reports to AGS, the alarm was raised, on behalf of GP & District Branch, of our lack of volunteers and our

foreseen unsustainability under the present system of AGS Bylaws and requirements. We were encouraged by support from other branches who were also experiencing volunteer fatigue and burnout.

As a result, in November and to the year-end, the AGS Board was in discussion to address the issue and figure out ways to lessen the demands placed on the branches.

Expanding the AGS Google Workspace for non-profits, seemed like a good start and GP Branch was extremely pleased to be allowed to pilot this program, under the administrative leadership of GP member, Doug Christian and the rest of the Google Workplace Steering Committee. Our administrator immediately issued our 'position' gmails and our Treasurer transferred our documents and files from the personal Google Drive we were using. We are embracing the tools Workspace has to offer and are in the transition phase of getting all Executive and Committee Chairs onboard.

Programs and Community Services:

Our January 23-24, 2023 Casino netted the Branch \$38,858.22.

After doing some research and discussions with AGLC, we learned we could apply up to 20% of Casino Proceeds towards Administrative/Bookkeeping Expense.

We hired a Contractor/Assistant in December (to be reviewed at the AGM in March), to act as Secretary and generally lighten the administrative load within the Executive.

Our Treasurer is in the process of arranging with the AGS Bookkeeper to share some of the bookkeeping duties which appears to be beneficial to all parties. These decisions proved better than we even imagined, finally giving some relief to our tired Executive.

Our ongoing programs that are quite popular and occasionally increase our membership are:

Genies in the Library where our 2 faithful volunteers receive clients on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays (except the summer months), for one-on-one research assistance, **Genies on the Road**

where a few of us travel and offer assistance to small groups for our Regional Libraries' patrons, whenever they request our services.

Research Queries - where our long-term Researcher fills requests for obituaries look-ups and other local information by request. The charge is \$20/hour and clients can conveniently pay by e-transfer through our Treasurer, to obtain immediate results.

Branch Library – our Branch Librarian has completed the sorting of our large Genealogical Library, into Reference and Circulating Collections. So far, circulation has been minimal.

Branch Newsletter: We only produced a spring edition of the Newsletter **Heritage Seekers** in 2023, due to the resignation of our Editor. Heritage Seekers will be on hold until a new editor comes forward.

Margaret Kay Memorial Bursary: The 2023 Margaret Kay Bursary, in the amount of \$1500, was awarded to Tricia Hutton, in support her studies at the National Institute for Genealogical Studies, Missoula, MT. As her commitment as recipient of the Bursary, Tricia agreed to offer a virtual presentation in January, 2024 to all AGS Members titled, "Seek and You May Find, an Analysis of various Census Records", via Google Meet.

Branch Databases: The Databases on our Website continue to be updated as indexing of obituaries from local newspapers are submitted to the Branch's Obituary Online Index. And the online Funeral Home Obituaries continue to be collected, printed and added to indexed binders in the Isabel Campbell Room. Our researcher finds these collections very useful as well as the digitized Daily Herald Tribune, stored on rolls of microfilm, all in the Isabel Campbell Room of the Grande Prairie Public Library.

Facebook Account: The Grande Prairie & District Branch's Facebook group page was in bad need of updating, one of the first projects our new Contractor tackled. It is now an attractive public page with much more information and activity.

Website: Our website update is on hold for now, but still contains useful links to our free Obituary Index and Grave Marker Databases and the 'Follow Up with Me' link for the public to request research queries.

The 'Members Only' feature is used to access previous editions of our Newsletters, Meeting Minutes plus Branch subscriptions to Newspapers.com (Isabel Campbell Room use only), MyHeritage.com login information and the DNA Bootcamp Webinars.

Other Outreach in 2023:

The Branch made moderate donations of residual Casino proceeds to three local projects in our genealogical community, including the \$2000 towards the AGS September 23rd Anniversary Conference.

March 4 three volunteers/Genies on the Road, travelled to Sexsmith's Shannon Library to assist eight of their enthusiastic patrons, with their family research.

We manned several Branch display tables at Community Events:

March 9 & 10 at the South Peace Teachers' Convention, showcasing the AGS Genealogy for Youth Program, showcasing some of the materials.

May 4th GP Branch was requested to offer a repeat session on Genealogy for Youth activity for Grade 5's at the Heritage Fair in the Public Library.

June 5 as part of the City of Grande Prairie sponsored Seniors' Week

Aug. 4 a City of Grande Prairie sponsored Heritage Day, outdoors in Muskosepi Park. As part of our publicity reach, we donated DNA kits, plus a one-year AGS complimentary membership as door prizes, for some of these events, plus a DNA kit donation to the Northwestern Retired Teachers' St. Nicholas Christmas Dinner on December 6.

Grande Prairie and District Branch is anticipating a much healthier 2024 as we move forward, fully implementing our recent Programs and further embracing the digital age and all it has to offer to continue making our task loads lighter.

Lethbridge & District Branch



Barry Simmonds

Volunteer Hours: 3083

Membership: 50

Meetings

We held monthly general meetings by videoconference and hybrid in January through April, with February being the Annual General Meeting. The same format was

used for March, April, September and November's meetings.

Bi-annual election

In February, we held our annual office elections.

We filled the positions of Vice president – Barry Simmonds, Secretary – Julie Miller, Treasurer – Kieran Biggins. Past President Marilyn Astle. This left the branch without a President. Barry Simmonds volunteered to fill in as acting President until one could be elected. In March. we held elections again and the position of President was filled by Barry Simmonds, Vice President by Julie Miller and Secretary by Wendy Warren.

Presentations

January: Sheryl Olson talked about her historical fiction book about the life of her great-great-grandmother

February: Velda Sjovold reviewed a branch history previously compiled by members, and members describing how they are storing and sharing their genealogy work.

March: Joyce Shortinghuse gave "**An Overview of how to use Family Search and My Heritage**"

April: Kevin Maclean presented "**How to research your home in Lethbridge**"

May: Member Brian Dobing gave a presentation on "**Where and How to Storage your research work**"

September: Joyce Shortinghuse gave a presentation on "**What to do with results from your DNA test**"

October: Herb Johnson talked about “**His service in the Korean War and the Canadian Armed Forces**”

November: Ellen Thompson Jennings presented “**Solving Mysteries with your DNA**”

Other Gatherings

In June, a planned picnic meeting was changed our plans so we utilized a common space at one member’s condo.

In October, our International Dinner was changed by rain, so we had a former service person talk about his time in the Canadian armed forces.

Donation of books and Money. In August. the branch received a donation of 100 + history books from Fort McMurray branch that closed down. In September, they made a donation to our branch.

Our Facility

We are still searching for an affordable facility for our meetings and library. We received a call from the City of Lethbridge for tenants for the Bowman Building. We initially put in the request that we are interested in renting a space. The City of Lethbridge will follow up with requesting our proposal for the space.

New Beginnings

In August, Velda Sjovold made a proposal to myself, about a joint record of presenters that all of the branches can use. I contacted our President Al Bromling about this project. Kurt Paterson, President of Edmonton Branch helped start this project. We have since got all of the Branches onboard with helping maintain a database of presenters and topics. Kurt Paterson and Deb Trout and myself have talked with Manitoba Genealogical Society, and Saskatchewan Genealogical Society about helping each other achieve their genealogical goals.

Other Projects & Activities

Our Resource Centre was open to the public three afternoons a week. We are now open on Thursday afternoon instead of Friday. The Branch newsletter *Yesterday’s Footprints* was published three times as usual and is publicly available on our website. Our

Facebook group *Lethbridge Genealogy* reached over 362 members by the end of 2023 as compared to 200 members by the end of 2022, 136 members in 2021, 89 in 2020 and 50 in 2019. Our project of collecting and digitizing obituaries and funeral cards continued. Our current dedicated volunteer team includes Alma and Charlie Berridge, Louella Cronkhite, Eleanor McMurchy and Bev Tufts.

Wendy Warren and Marilyn Astle were recognized for their editing of the 50th anniversary book.

In October, Nobleford High School asked us to put on a research session to help some students with their genealogy. We had 5 members volunteer to help. The Branch is grateful for volunteers that have made 2023 a successful year.

50th Anniversary

Our branch was represented by 5 members, Barry Simmonds, Doug Macleod, Henning Muendel, Susan Haga and Marilyn Astle.

Conclusion

As 2023 ended, our major concerns are to find an affordable and suitable facility for our meetings and library, increasing our membership numbers, and find volunteers willing to take on various responsibilities. My appreciation goes to all who continue to support the branch, in particular the other members of the current executive team: Julie Miller, Wendy Warren and Kieran Biggins.

Medicine Hat & District Branch



Don Zimmer

Volunteer Hours: 2007.75

Membership: 60 (down from 61 in 2022)

2023 Branch Executive:

President	Donald Zimmer
Vice President	Debra Wickham
Secretary	Faye Knoblick
Treasurer	Heather Stahl
Past President	Dwight Brown

Meetings

Hybrid meetings are scheduled for the first Wednesday evening of every month, format being the business meeting followed by a genealogical program. Our AGM is the first Wednesday of February.

At the February AGM 2023, the new Executive as above was voted into office.

Monthly hybrid meetings (via Zoom) held January through June and September through December 2023 (we have adequate equipment and capability – thanks to Clark Lang for his ongoing efforts towards this initiative, also thanks to Deb Wickham for sharing her Zoom membership with us). No meetings were held meetings in July & August. Minutes are on file with the chapter.

Only 6 programs were presented in 2023 due to a lack of a program's chairperson (many were member led). Committee vacancies include Newsletter Editor, Cemeteries Chairperson, Lunch committee and Programs.

Executive meetings are called on an as needed basis. The executive includes those shown above plus all committee chairpersons. In 2023, 3 meetings were held. Minutes are on file with the chapter.

Certificates Received

Long term certificates presented by Donald Zimmer, to the following members at the December 2023 meeting:

Debra Wickham – 10 years
Clark and Heather Lang – 15 years
Leanne Balfour – 15 years
Gordon and Linda Willis – 15 years
Grace Roth – 45 years
Margery Ensminger – 45 years

Computer

New computer committee chairpersons were put in place after the 2023 AGM. They are Clark Lang and Doreen Schank. They have been working to establish consistent passwords on all computers, recording this and other computer information as well as simplifying the systems (That's a big job – we have 3 computers.)

Adobe Acrobat was installed on our computers (acquired through TECHSOUP).

Information back-up system was changed to a number of hard drives for redundancy purposes.

Library

The library has been open to members only on Wednesday for 2 hrs from 1 to 3 PM during months when we have meetings (except for December).

MHDGS signed up for the American Ancestors site for 2023. A sign-in sheet will be used to track usage to determine if we continue this in future years.

Now have ResourceMate Support updated on the computer and will begin to use it to record our library. Expanded library committee and new chairperson Sandy Butchko are working on reorganizing our library to remove unused documents and make room for new acquisitions. Also received books from the Ft. McMurray Library closure.

A youth collection has been added to our library made possible by a grant received previously.

Projects:

Yearbooks scanning has been on hold since COVID. Unsure when we will continue.

Social Correspondence for 2022 – A total of 27 cards were sent out to members as follows:

Thank you – 13, Sympathy – 4, Get well – 9, Birthday 1. The cost of the cards plus postage is one of our member's Donations to our local branch.

Medicine Hat continues to be a part of the Google Workspace initiative. Donald Zimmer is on the Operational committee has not attended any meetings due to health concerns. We are behind on this initiative.

Medicine Hat chapter has signed a MoU with Alberta Family Histories Society to provide them with MHDGS's cemetery information for their database. This is an ongoing project that is likely to take some time to complete. Medicine Hat also provided their cemetery information to AGS for inclusion into the ARNI database.

Medicine Hat chapter has started to look at replacing its website – see more information under the websites section of this report.

In total, 4 members of the chapter planned and assisted with a display table at the AGS 50th anniversary conference in Edmonton on Sept 23, 2023. These members attended both the conference and banquet. One of these members collected information from the members and prepared the submission to the 2013 to 2023 AGS history Book entitled *In Search of Gold*. Outstanding volunteer awards were presented to a number of MHDGS members at the conference

Newspapers from Indian Head Museum now imported to all 3 of our computers as follows:

- Indian Head Wolseley News 1973-2009
- Indian Head Vidette 1896-1912
- Saskatchewan People 1988
- Qu'Appelle Progress 1885-1945
- Qu'Appelle Progress 1946-1969
- Vidette Supplement 1898
- Indian Head News 1913-1973
- Wolseley News 1938-1943
- Sintaluta Times 1917-1947
- Qu'Appelle Vidette 1884-1896
- Prairie Witness 1903

On Remembrance Day, a donation of \$100 was made to the Royal Canadian Legion. Clark and Mel volunteered to lay the wreath during the ceremony.

Queries – We are still handling queries as before but the requests are way down.

Sammis Seeker

No issues of *Saamis Seeker* were published in 2023 as the position of editor has remained vacant. Scanned copies of our past newsletters are now available on the MHDGS website.

Social Media Accounts

At present, we have 244 followers on Facebook and have cancelled our Twitter account, providing a platform for members to keep up to date on upcoming events, genealogical resources and stories. This is up from the 2022.

Special Interest Groups (SIG)

Our Computer SIG is still in place but inactive. Our Germans from Russia SIG is also inactive but the SIG leader is available to assist members with their searches. Genealogy Family Tree SIG has since stopped meeting. Both SIG leaders continue to present information to members like webinars and tips to help them search for their ancestors.

Website

The website continues to be of great use to many researchers across the world, mostly from Canada and USA. The scanning of the telephone books has slowed due to resources and time commitment. The books not scanned are the yellow pages books of Calgary and Edmonton, 1981 to 2001, and the numerical indexes of Calgary and Edmonton. Many of the original scans of the phone books were very large PDF's and difficult for researchers to view. All the oversized PDFs were broken into smaller files of less than 10 megabytes to make for faster viewing and cost savings to our society. We pay Amazon Web Services for the viewing of the files per megabyte. The phone book project is considered by the webmaster to be completed but some additions were made in 2023. A sum of 1.2K\$ was received in 2023 by MHDGS from Fort McMurray branch funds in recognition of the work done on this project.

The records of the cemeteries in southeastern Alberta as seen on the website have been updated and the files rewritten. The webmaster has trained another person to assist in programming the website.

Our website continues to receive between 1000 and 1500 hits monthly with many users coming back a number of times. Countries using our website include: Canada, USA, Great Britain, China, France, Indonesia, Mexico, India and many others. Our webmaster is a MHDGS member and he continues to update and upgrade the site.

In May, 2023 it was suggested that our current website would need to be replaced since the platform it's on is no longer supported. A committee of Clark Lang, Deb Wickham and Donald Zimmer received a bid from the webmaster who manages the Medicine Hat Monuments website. The \$3K amount to do this

work and develop a website on the WordPress platform and using the DIVI theme was approved by the membership however the company was unable to perform the work and has withdrawn its bid. In late 2023, a second quote for \$5K was obtained through another provider.

Duties, Rules and Procedures Committee

This committee consisting of Doreen Schank, Debra Wickham and Heather Stahl continues to meet and revise our documented processes on an ongoing basis.

Red Deer & District Branch



Jessie Dial

Volunteer Hours: 1486.5

Membership: 48

This last year has been a year of changes for the Red Deer Branch. We have focused on our social media presence, on our connections in the community, and on providing services and programs for not only our branch, but the public as well. This has resulted in an increase of membership, increased interest in what we are doing, and a renewed hope in what the future holds for our branch.

In the spring, we started our Find A Grave project, which has seen us add over one thousand gravesite photos to the Alto Reste Cemetery. This has included creating over 600 new memorials. This is an ongoing project, as the cemetery is quite large. When we began the project, Find A Grave knew of 3,000 internments, and as of this report, it is now aware of 5,000. In speaking with the City of Red Deer, who manages the cemetery, it is believed that there are currently over 6,000 people interred in the cemetery.

We began posting regularly on *Facebook* and *Instagram*. Many of our members are not on *Facebook*, but it has attracted new members, and the ones that are

on *Facebook* have appreciated the up-to-date events posted, the tips on genealogy and knowing that we have an active social media presence.

In April 2023, we once again co-hosted the Family History Fair in conjunction with the LDS church where we hold our monthly meetings. We had an excellent turnout, fantastic speakers, and gained new members from the event. There were many compliments in regard to this seminar, and we look forward to hosting again next year, along with the AGS AGM in April of 2024.

Every year we break for the summer, and the last meeting that was held in June was a potluck dinner at the Pioneer Lodge. It was a wonderful event, with an excellent turnout. We were blessed to have Red Deer's historian, Michael Dawe, join us for the potluck. Little did we know that he would pass unexpectedly in December of 2023. We are so grateful for the time that we had with him.

This is the second year we ran a SIG for Family history writers. This group meets monthly at the Red Deer Archives where they discuss family history and writing about their own lives as well as the lives of their ancestors. The group has grown steadily over the year, and they have held a summer BBQ and a Christmas party for their group members.

A second SIG was created this year as well, for the descendants of British Emigrated Children. There was a great turnout to the first meeting and the second will be happening soon. This group only met once in 2023 but they are planning to meet every other month in 2024.

The latest new initiative our branch has begun is an event in collaboration with the Red Deer Library called, "Bring Brag or Break." It meets monthly at the library and gives an opportunity to discuss what projects we are working on. We can bring interesting things that we want to share, brag about what we have learned or found, and break through brick walls by sharing where we are stuck and trouble shooting together. It has been a success and we have had people come from outside of our branch as well as the Central Alberta Historical Society. The Library is pleased with the program and has asked us to continue. We are contracted to continue until June 2024.

We have accomplished a lot in the last year, thanks to our fantastic volunteers and our dedicated members who have all been willing to work hard for our branch. We so appreciate everyone that is a part of our branch and look forward to growing even more in 2024.

Wetaskiwin Branch



Alice Hoyle

Volunteer Hours: 2357.5
Membership: 30 members,
representing 36 individuals.

2023 Executive:

President – Alice Hoyle
Vice-President – Lorraine
McKay
Secretary – Pam Cooke,

Treasurer – Lee Koop

Projects:

Archives – The City of Wetaskiwin Archives was officially opened on June 10th, 2023. Numerous people were in attendance to help with the ribbon cutting, including several of our branch members. The Archives will be ‘overseen’ by the Heritage Museum in Wetaskiwin. The facility will not be open to the public on a walk-in basis. Rather, if one wishes to research at the Archives you need to contact the Heritage Museum and arrange for one of the Museum’s staff members to meet you at the Archives. The availability of a staff member who can come to the Archives will depend on what is happening at the Museum at the time the researcher wishes to visit. Not exactly a convenient option, but at least the Archives can be used again as a research resource. As of the end of 2023, there are only a limited number of items available to the researcher. The Museum staff is working on documenting and cataloguing the items in the climate controlled ‘vault’ and at this time, those items are not available to anyone researching.

New Project: Collectibles Market – April 19, 2024. Branch members will be taking on this project in 2024: a fund-raising project with proceeds going to the Heritage Museum, to support them with the database expenses relating to the Archives collection. Branch members will donate items from their collection; the market will be held at the Heritage Museum.

Branch Resource Centre – Our resources are now housed in a separate room at the Archives. The resources we have in our collection are available to those researching at the Archives.

Community Outreach – Wetaskiwin Branch member Nelda Layton is the Director of the Family Search Center in Wetaskiwin. She gave a presentation at the Wetaskiwin Public Library on the Family Search website, detailing the various options for research and sharing of information.

Wetaskiwin Branch member Bob Maynard was invited to speak at Telford Hall in March of 2023 – the topic being Genealogy and how to get started in your research.

Education and Training:

At each of our meetings our Program Coordinator, Claudia Malloch, has provided us with webinars, training sessions or group information sharing sessions after the business part of our monthly meetings. Many of our members also regularly attend webinars hosted by genealogical societies in various locations. We have all gained a wealth of knowledge from these webinars.

AGS Conference, 2023 AND AGS 50TH Anniversary:

Seven of our branch members travelled to Edmonton to attend the above event. Our newsletter editor, Sharon Aney, received her 6th Kenneth Young Newsletter Award, this time for “Best Overall Branch Newsletter”. Congratulations, Sharon! Sharon was also awarded a Life Membership in AGS. Our branch, as a whole, received an Outstanding Volunteer Award – a new Award created for the 50th Anniversary.

Red Deer Genealogy Workshop, April 22, 2023:

Wetaskiwin branch members Claudia Malloch and Alice Hoyle attended this function. It was very well organized, with informative speakers.

Monthly Meeting Presentations:

January – January’s presentation had to be deferred to February

February – Due to the length of our AGM and General Meeting, we were unable to view the planned presentation.

March – “Trousers, Black Domestic, Tacks and Housekeeping Bills: Problem Solving with ‘Trivial Details’” – an Elizabeth Shown Mills Legacy Family Tree Webinar presentation.

April – “Genealogy A to Z – a Trivia Adventure by Thomas MacEntee” this presentation and the accompanying handout were very useful for genealogy researchers.

May – “Family History on the Canadian Prairies” – presented by Dave Obee. This ever-popular presenter outlined numerous ways we can research our ancestors, using records on various websites. A very detailed 4-page handout was provided.

June – We met in-person at the newly opened Archives. Prior to the meeting’s start, we had a tour of the Archives. There is a newspaper room with local papers from 1911, vault with climate-controlled storage, an area for flat storage of maps, freezer storage for celluloid materials, and a workroom. We were advised that a database of the collection is being developed.

September – “Spending Time With my Ancestors This Summer” – branch members shared what they had done in the summer to increase their knowledge of their ancestors. Some very interesting stories were shared: travel, creation of a cookbook, English research, creation of the 100-year history of the Wetaskiwin Golf Club, attending family weddings and displaying family photos at those events, etc.

October – “What’s New at the Family Search Website?” – Branch member and Director of the

Family Search Centre in Wetaskiwin gave a presentation on the new features of the Family Search website. She demonstrated how the Memories Portal had changed and the advantages of the new methods of sharing information.

November –The presentation planned was “What Happened to Uncle Walter?” but Zoom decided differently: several branch members had problems logging on to Zoom, and our Meeting Presentation Committee Chair was not able to share her screen. Thank you, technology.

No meeting in December. June, September, and October were in-person meetings. All other meetings were Zoom meetings.

Volunteerism:

Some of our branch members continue to volunteer at the Family Search Center in Wetaskiwin. As well, there are members of our branch who volunteer to assist members of the public with their research. These requests for assistance usually come by word of mouth: someone who knows one of our branch members and suggests the researcher contact our branch member.

Branch Members’ Contribution to our Branch Newsletter and to RS:

In 2023, our branch members contributed several articles to our branch newsletter as well as to the AGS publication *Relatively Speaking*.

Branch Committee Chairs and Their Contributions:
So many of our branch members commit countless hours to make sure the branch is viable and meaningful to the whole membership. As the President, I value everyone’s contribution. Some committee chairs go that extra mile because of the committees they oversee. Special mention should be given to Lee Koop who keeps our website current by posting the branch newsletters as they are published, branch activities, as well as updating the appearance of our website. This, in addition to being our Treasurer, our Membership Chair, and one of the branch Volunteer Researchers. Also deserving special mention is Claudia Malloch who researches topics for our monthly meeting presentations in order that we can keep learning. As well, our newsletter

editor, Sharon Aney, deserves special mention: she encourages us to write our stories, comes up with new ideas for fundraisers, and was the person who spearheaded our 3 branch booklet publications. These 3 booklets contained personal stories from our School Days, Memories of Christmas, and Covid Lockdown.

Community Involvement and Recognition, 2023: Wetaskiwin branch member Bob Maynard and Gordon Fraser, a member of the informal Leduc Genealogy group, meet on a regular basis at the Millet Public Library to discuss genealogy research tactics.

In October, 2023, branch member Sharon Aney was inducted as a member of the Women of Aspenland at the Heritage Museum in Wetaskiwin. The honorees were introduced at the Grand Opening where their community involvement and dedication were outlined. The presentation of the 3 new inductees was followed by a lunch and lots of visiting and congratulations.

Tagline: Bringing the Past to the Present for the Future

The above tagline was created by our branch member, Sharon Aney. Some of our branch members expressed concern about the fact that this was being used in some AGS publications without Sharon being recognized as the creator. Branch members asked me to bring this up at the February 2023 AGS Board meeting. As requested, I did submit our branch's concern about the lack of recognition for the creator of the tagline.

Thank you to the Wetaskiwin branch members who volunteered to be on the Executive, the Committee Chairs, those who contributed articles to our newsletter, and all our members who continue to share their wisdom and knowledge with the branch members. Your contributions are very much appreciated.

***Bringing the Past to the Present
for the Future©***

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Alberta Records Name Index (ARNI)

Norma Wolowyk



AGS members began recording information from grave markers and cemetery written records soon after the formation of the Alberta Genealogical Society in 1973.

The Alberta Records Name Index (ARNI) was launched on the AGS website in September of 2022. The searchable data in ARNI was the same as previously listed in the AGS Surname Database (867,123 records). More data was added and ARNI, by the end of 2023 had 1,039,779 searchable records. The data originates from cemetery written records, grave markers, local history books, newspapers and life events records (births, marriages and deaths).

During 2023 members were made aware that they must create a password to access ARNI. This password requirement is different than the login to the AGS website. Once AGS members create a password they are given access to the complete record information while non-members can access limited details.

Conversations were initiated during 2023 with the Branches about adding records to ARNI which they have collected. Data has been received from Medicine Hat and Drayton Valley Branches. During 2023, five volunteers were busy typing up indexes to local history books and life events (records of birth, marriages and deaths). Hopefully ARNI will continue to grow.

The history of the AGS Surname Database later to be ARNI was compiled and submitted to be included in *Volume III Achieving Gold, Half a Century of Success: The History of the Alberta Genealogical Society 2013-2023*.

We thank Dwayne and Lara at *OtherMachines* for continued support of ARNI and their patience in responding to our questions and requests.

Archivist

Norma Wolowyk



During 2023, I continued to collect copies of *Relatively Speaking*, annual reports, financial documents, events information, board minutes, etc. for eventual deposit at the Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA). A copy Volume III *Achieving Gold, Half a Century of Success: The History of the Alberta*

Genealogical Society 2013-2023 published in 2023 was obtained for deposit.

Three boxes, marked “for Archives” were received from Fort McMurray in July 2023. Materials in the boxes were well-organized and labelled. Included were minutes, Branch newsletter *Lines of Descent*, a summary of the Branch history and other miscellaneous documents. I have organized all box contents for eventual deposit at the PAA.

Gaming

Laura Turnbull



Volunteer Hours: 95

AGS Casino event:

AGS started off the year with the knowledge that we would be having our next casino sometime in the first quarter of 2024. This was by way of notice from the

Alberta Gaming & Liquor Commission (AGLC) in December 2022. Our last casino had been on March 20 & 21, 2022.

In early August of 2023, we received the actual dates of February 6 & 7, 2024 for the casino. This triggered making the contract arrangements for our advisors –

two for the cash cage and one for the count room. We also confirmed our preference for the casino facility at Century Casino on Fort Road in Edmonton.

An initial email was sent out September 12th to previous casino volunteers. A notice and signup sheet were also placed at the AGS Office and the AGS & Edmonton Branch Library and Research Centre and I contacted those individuals who came forward. As well, I spoke at the Edmonton Branch general meeting on October 26th and the Edmonton Branch England/Wales SIG on November 2nd.

A notice appeared in the Edmonton Branch newsletter “*The Twig*” on November 4th and a poster / notice was in the November issue of *Relatively Speaking*.

As of November 10th, we had over half of the 50 volunteers needed.

The license application for the casino was submitted to AGLC before December 1, 2023.

Between December and mid-January several emails also went out to all members of AGS and a full roster was completed in time for the event.

The casino was held on February 6 & 7, 2024 and we will receive the proceeds in late May 2024.

Achieving Gold Publication for AGS’ 50th Anniversary:

I prepared and submitted a short history of the AGS casinos over the years for this publication in April. The first casino event for AGS was in 1990 and by the end of 2022, AGS had participated in 18 casinos which have helped with many of our programs, especially rent for the AGS and Edmonton Branch Library and Research Centre.

In addition, AGS received permission from Alberta Gaming in 2006 for various AGS branches to also conduct casino events. Those currently licensed for casinos are Brooks, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat. Fort McMurray Branch also held casino events from 2008 to 2022. Please see “Achieving Gold” for the full article.

Branch casino events: Unfortunately, the Fort McMurray Branch closed its doors in 2023 and this also necessitated final dispersal of any casino funds in their control. I assisted Tammy Grantham in working with this aspect of their dispersal.

Grande Prairie Branch held a successful casino on January 23 & 24, 2023 and received the proceeds of \$36,858.22 on May 25, 2023.

Medicine Hat Branch and Brooks Branch held a joint casino on October 6 & 7, 2022 and received the proceeds of \$8,181.54 each in February 2023.

Lethbridge Branch last had a casino in 2021. They are now scheduled to have one on September 3 & 4, 2024.

Genealogy4Youth Marion Rex Howard



Volunteer Hours: 191

2023 Metrics

1. Membership

- 1 Student (\$5.00) Membership – Edmonton
- 2 Young Adult (\$25.00) Membership – Edmonton

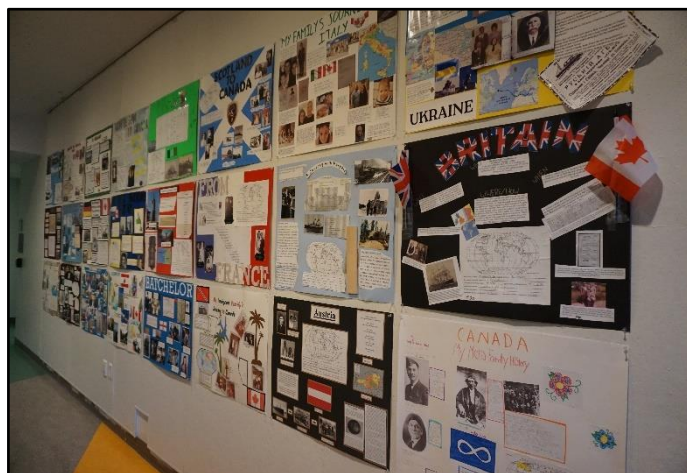
2. Youth Project Certificates

- 151 Certificates for completion of youth genealogy projects

3. Relatively Speaking Articles

- “Drayton Valley Escape Room” by Connie Stuhl, May 2023, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 60.
- ““Our Family Roots’ project returns to Art Gallery of Alberta” by Lynne Duigou, May 2023, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 61-62.
- “Youth Write On: My Family’s Immigration Journey to Canada from Ukraine” by Ella Fisher, August 2023, Vol. 51, No. 3, pp. 128-129.

- “Youth Write On: My Great Grandma’s Story from Scotland to Canada” by Abby Smitten, November 2023, Volume 54, No. 4, pp. 170-172.



Our Family Roots” at Art Gallery of Alberta

The collaboration between AGS and the Art Gallery of Alberta continued for a second year with 46 students from St. Thomas Aquinas in Spruce Grove on exhibition for almost a month in the TD Learning Gallery in March-April 2023. On Sunday, March 19, 2023, Lynne Duigou, Past President of the Alberta Genealogical Society presented 46 students with certificates for the completion of a poster on their Indigenous or Immigrant Family History. Special guest presenters included David Ridley of Edmonton Heritage Council, Mayor Jeff Acker, Trustee Gerald Bernakevitch, Principal Lynnette Tarr, Assistant Principal Luke Lehman and Grade 5 teachers.



Lynne Duigou, Past President, (left) presenting certificate to Jordan Regier (centre) while Marion Rex, Project Coordinator, looks on

Mayor Acker presented each student with a City of Spruce Grove pin. The families received free admission to the Art Gallery of Alberta for the day. Approximately 250 students, parents and family members gathered for the presentation of certificates, the gallery viewing, and the juice and cookies reception sponsored by St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School. A newspaper account of the event was published in the Friday, March 24, 2023 edition of the *Spruce Grove Examiner*. Lynne Duigou prepared another article for *Relatively Speaking*, a pictorial display for the office, as well as a report for the Board of Directors on *Our Family Roots Project*. Some of the students gave permission to have their poster put on display at AGS' 50th Anniversary Conference. There has been interest in writing articles for *Relatively Speaking*.

Immigrant or Indigenous History Posters for AGS Conference

Certificates for 27 posters were distributed to those students whose work had been at the Art Gallery of Alberta and were willing to have their posters on display for our 50th Anniversary Conference.

Brooks & District Branch



Lorraine Spence from Brooks & District Branch put together grade-appropriate genealogy activities suitable for Kindergarten through High School, i.e. draw a family picture, interview a relative about a family tradition, or write about a family artifact as part of the Artifacts Tell a Story activity. Student work from 15 students and related family artifacts were put

on display October 16-21, 2023 at the Brooks & District Public Library in celebration of Family History Month.



Drayton Valley Branch Escape Room

Connie Stuhl from Drayton Valley Branch reported that they hosted a family event where parents helped children label spots on trees made with bingo daubers with names of family members – what fun! Drayton Valley also hosted an escape room as part of their Genealogy4Youth program at the Drayton Valley Library during spring break, the last week of March 2023, with 18 total participants. The goal of the escape room was to locate ancestors' pictures and place them correctly on the family tree, as well as solve a small puzzle, finding pieces along the way. All participants had fun and solved the escape room, some with the help of their parents. I think the members of the Branch had as much fun as the participants, watching them solve the puzzles to get to the end. Some families were familiar with genealogy, while others were introduced with this activity. All participants received prizes of a family tree chart, pencil, and a dilly bar.

Grande Prairie Branch and the Heritage Fair

Maxine Maxwell and Gail Schau from Grande Prairie Branch held two sessions for Grade 5 students at the GP Heritage Fair on May 4, 2023 on the Homestead Game using dice throws to move back and forth across the game board learning about homesteading. There were two groups of six students playing the game. Groans & moans were heard when they had to go back to start, as well as cheers when they got to skip the backward moving squares. They gave kudos to John Althouse for incorporating homestead concepts into a meaningful activity for students this age.

Lethbridge & District Branch

Members from Lethbridge & District Branch travelled to the Nobleford K-12 School to work on genealogy projects with the students.

Wetaskiwin Branch

There has been interest shown in introducing family history studies to the current 4H programs in the coming year. Should the 4H decide to adopt family history research into their programming for the next year, Westaskiwin branch members are ready to assist.

Grants/Other Funding Committee

Marion Rex Howard



Volunteer hours: 308

Sponsorship

The Alberta Genealogical Society (AGS) is forever grateful for the funding received through sponsorship from the Government of Alberta and the Edmonton

Heritage Council. AGS also relies on casino funding, general donations, and research income to help fund their activities.

Meetings Held

I attended the February, May, September, and November AGS board meetings, as well as the AGM and 50th Anniversary in order to be current with AGS board business. I also met regularly with the bookkeeper and office coordinator, as well as virtual meetings held by the Finance Committee. I also chaired the Longer-Term Investment Committee Meetings for the Richard “Dick” Nash Estate making recommendations to the Board that will give us sustainability into the future.

Grants

The Alberta Genealogical Society is very appreciative of the funding received through sponsorship from the Historic Resources Management Heritage Division, and the Edmonton Heritage Council.

- **Historic Resources Management Heritage Division Sponsorship**—The Provincial Heritage Organizations are under the umbrella of the Historic Resources Management Heritage Division, funded by the Department of Arts, Culture, and Status of Women, Government of Alberta. In 2023, AGS received **\$29,000** (\$29,000 in 2022) which was applied to expenses incurred for our publications, training programs, professional consultations, and general administration.
- **Edmonton Heritage Council (EHC) Sponsorship**—In 2023, AGS received **\$23,537.10** in operational funding from the EHC funded by the City of Edmonton (\$26,964 in 2022). This funding helps provide both staffing and operational support.

General Donations

Thanks to the generosity of its members, businesses, and other non-profit associations, AGS and its branches received \$5,816.57 in donations, as noted below:

• Provincial Office	\$2,482.72
• Brooks	-
• Camrose	45.00
• Drayton Valley	-
• Edmonton	1,879.75
• Fort McMurray	7.63
• Grande Prairie	112.00
• Lethbridge	280.00
• Medicine Hat	499.47
• Red Deer	325.00
• Wetaskiwin	<u>185.00</u>
• TOTAL	<u>\$ 5,816.57</u>

Thank you letters and donation receipts were mailed to all individual donors in February 2024. We are grateful to all those on the list of individual donors and donations made in memorium published in this annual report.

AGS 50th Anniversary Conference 2023 & Awards



Lynne Duigou

The Edmonton Inn and Conference Centre was the site of the 50th Anniversary Conference on September 23, 2023. 149 people registered to hear fourteen speakers. Dave Obee, genealogist, researcher, writer and editor was the

Keynote and Banquet speaker. Each of the conference sessions was recorded and are available for 90 days on the AGS YouTube channel for both the in-person conference attendees and the 24 people who purchased the Virtual Attendance registration. Registrants can see all thirteen sessions at their leisure with the link provided to them.

The topics of the Conference included: research in French Colonization, Irish in Western Canada, British Home Children, Ukrainian Immigration, Métis History and genealogy, German Immigration and settlement, AGS – ARNI, ANI and Homestead databases, MyHeritageLibrary, Records of Western Canada, Edmonton Public Library Digitization of AGS Cemetery Books, Railways role in Settlement of Alberta, and the 77 Township Project of Land records prior to European settlement.

The day concluded with an Anniversary Banquet, Speaker and Awards Ceremony for 122 attendees. We were fortunate to have in attendance Frank Easton #103 who was one of the Founders of AGS in 1973. Frank was given a plaque in recognition of 50 years of loyal membership. D'arcy Hande #110, also a founder and Carin Routledge #125 were unable to attend but will be presented with 50-year membership plaques. AGS presented ten members with 25 year membership certificates and three 40 year membership certificates. Three ladies, Marion Rex Howard, #3341, Edmonton Branch, Sharon Aney, #4148, Wetaskiwin Branch and Lynn Fogwill #4806, Edmonton Branch were presented with Lifetime Memberships for their volunteer work for AGS over many years. The AGS history book volume III, 2013-2023 *Achieving Gold – A Half*

Century of Success, edited by Bob Franz was launched. Sixty AGS members and Branches were presented with the following award certificates and plaques. Two awards, also presented to our members in 2022 were acknowledged. They are the Heritage Award and the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Medal. Congratulations to all the recipients for your loyal volunteer service and membership.

AGS 50th Anniversary Awards – 23 September 2023 Presented by Al Bromling, President Long-Term Membership Certificates – Twenty-five Years

Douglas W. Chambers, #3271 Edmonton Branch
Douglas and Shirley Youngman, #3644 Edmonton Branch

Donna Ritter, #3786 (died May 30, 2023) Edmonton Branch

Myrna McNiven, #3798 Edmonton Branch

Heather Harper, #3831 Edmonton Branch

Arlene Hedlund, #386 Edmonton Branch

Colleen Rispler, #3888 Edmonton Branch

Jeneane Roberts, #3898 Edmonton Branch

Evelyn Doberstein, #3901 Edmonton Branch

Nan Morrison, #3926 Edmonton Branch

Long-Term Membership Certificates – Forty Years

Blanche M. Thomson, #1280 Edmonton Branch

Edward & Paulette Pohranychny, #1315 Edmonton Branch

Dawn Morrone, #1376 Edmonton Branch

Long-Term Membership Plaques – Fifty Years

Frank Easton, #103 Edmonton Branch

D'arcy Hande, #110 Edmonton Branch

Carin Routledge, #125 Edmonton Branch

Life Membership

- Marion Rex Howard, #3341, Edmonton Branch, TYFT instructor, 2002-2023, Edmonton Branch VP 2003-2005, Edmonton Branch Pres. 2005-2007, AGS Treasurer 2016-2022, Grants Chair 2007-2023 raising \$600,725+, Genealogy 4Youth 2017-2023 completed 1427 Projects, Heritage Awareness award in 2018
- Sharon Aney, #4148, Wetaskiwin Branch – founding member, held various Exec positions, Newsletter editor 10yrs+, encourages members

and chaired three publications, contributes articles to *Relatively Speaking*

- Lynn Fogwill, #4806, Edmonton Branch – Long-time member, taught developed a genealogy course and taught in the ELLA program for AGS, TYFT program, Library volunteer 2007-2023, updated library volunteer manual with Neal Finn, Produced a Provenance document for Charles Denny Collection

50th Anniversary OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER Award

In recognition of outstanding volunteer services provided to the Society on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Alberta Genealogical Society 1973-2023.

Margery Ensminger, #854, Medicine Hat & District Branch

Teresa Parasynchuk, #2293, Medicine Hat & District Branch

Claudine Nelson, #2592, Edmonton Branch

Eileen Stahl, #3226, Medicine Hat & District Branch

Diane Lehr, #3345, Red Deer & District Branch

Marilyn Astle, #3422 Lethbridge and Edmonton

Bruce Boelstler, #3454, Edmonton Branch

Deb Boelstler, #3454, Edmonton Branch

Lauranne Hemmingway, #3586, Red Deer & District Branch

Melvin Bender, #4251, Medicine Hat & District Branch

Denise Daubert, # 4976, Edmonton Branch

Carolynne Ross, #5101, Edmonton Branch

Marlene Smith, #5313, Medicine Hat Branch

Clark Lang, #5540, Medicine Hat & District Br.

Faye Knoblick, #5635, Medicine Hat & District

Bob Franz, #5741, Brooks & District Branch

Doreen Schank, #5782, Medicine Hat & District

Jean Boxer, #5841, Red Deer & District Branch

Debra Wickham, #6019, Medicine Hat & District Branch

Janice Duffy, #6123, Red Deer & District Branch

Raymond Cyr, #6191, Red Deer & District Branch

Terry Terlesky, #6347, Edmonton Branch

Carren Ross, #6446, Red Deer & District Branch

Wendy Warren, #6626, Lethbridge & District Branch

Marie Vieira #6563, Edmonton Branch

Donna Arnold, #6867, Red Deer & District Branch

Volunteers of Edmonton Branch

Volunteers of Wetaskiwin Branch

Kenneth Young Newsletter Awards – Excellence in Branch Newsletters

Certificate for Best Original Article – “*Generate More Interest in Family History*” by **Susan Haga**, #5223, Lethbridge & District Branch, *Yesterday’s Footprints*, November 2022, Vol. 39, No. 3, p. 8.

Certificate for Best Local Content – Brooks Branch “*History of B and D Heir Lines: A History of Publishing Excellence*” by R. Franz, #5741, Brooks and District Branch, *B and D Heir Lines*, Spring 2022, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 16-18. Editor **Glenn Michell**

Honourable mention (no certificate) – “*Remembering Veterans*” collected by Editor **Freddi Bromling** at November 2022 meeting, Editor #6205, Grande Prairie & District Branch *Heritage Seekers*, November 2022, Vol. 44, No. 2, pp. 4-11.

Plaque for Best Overall Newsletter & Certificate for the editor to keep Wetaskiwin Branch, *Roots & Branches*, January 2022, Vol. 20, No. 1, Editor: Sharon Aney, #4148

Thanks to the Judging Committee:

Marilyn Astle (Lethbridge & District and Edmonton Branches),

Wendy Warren (Lethbridge & District Branch), and Connie Stuhl (Drayton Valley Branch)

Peter Staveley Memorial Award – *Relatively Speaking* Article - Name on Peter Staveley plaque & Certificate for best article “*Genealogical Resources from the Dirty Thirties*” Lianne Kruger, #5789 Red Deer & District Branch, in *Relatively Speaking*, Volume 50, #2, pp. 124-129.

Thanks to the Judging Committee: *Brenda Nugent, Helene Unger, and Donna Wyatt*

Certificates of Appreciation

- Certificate with heartfelt thanks to **Edmonton Heritage Council** for their generous support to the Alberta Genealogical Society for Operational Funding for Genealogical Resources and Programming 2023
- Certificate with heartfelt thanks to **Historic Resources Management Branch** for their generous support to the Alberta Genealogical Society for funding of Genealogical Resources and Programming 2023

- Certificate in appreciation of the dedication of the **AGS Research Services Team** who earned \$4,307.42 for AGS through their efforts in assisting family history researchers
- Certificate with heartfelt thanks to **Richard “Dick” Nash, #659**, for his generous bequest to the Alberta Genealogical Society for Operational Funding for Genealogical Resources and Programming

Special Mention Awards

Special Mention Award – Richard “Dick” Nash (posthumously), #659, Fort McMurray Branch In recognition of your loyalty and work done to maintain Fort McMurray Branch for many years.

Special Mention Award – Pat Marlowe, #2149, Fort McMurray Branch

In recognition of your loyalty and work done to maintain Fort McMurray Branch for many years.

Special Mention Award – Laverne Cormier, #2215, Fort McMurray Branch In recognition of your loyalty and work done to maintain Fort McMurray Branch for many years.

Special Mention Award – Pam Forsyth, #2585, Edmonton Branch

In recognition of work done on Richard “Dick” Nash Memorial for the AGS website.

Special Mention Award – Dale Hannigan, #2832, Fort McMurray Branch In recognition of your loyalty and work done to maintain Fort McMurray Branch for many years.

Special Mention Award – Diane Lehr, #3345, Red Deer & District Branch In recognition of many years of leadership and volunteer service to the Red Deer & District Branch.

Special Mention Award – Neil Finn, #3974, Edmonton Branch In recognition of work done on Library Volunteer Manual and with Irish SIG.

Special Mention Award – Tammy Grantham, #4744, Fort McMurray Branch – In recognition of your loyalty and work done to maintain Fort McMurray Branch for many years.

Special Mention Award – Cathy Marriot, #5193, Fort McMurray Branch In recognition of your loyalty and work done to maintain Fort McMurray Branch for many years.

Special Mention Award – Jock Howard, #5379, Edmonton Branch

In recognition of work done in getting the recording

completed for the Conference Speakers and providing them for AGS YouTube channel.

Special Mention Award – Lou and Lynne Duigou #5510 – Edmonton Branch – In recognition of your role in making “Our Family Roots” Youth Event at the Art Gallery of Alberta a success: judging, hosting, photographing, reporting in *Relatively Speaking* and making displays.

Special Mention Award – Kurt Paterson, #5962, Edmonton Branch

In recognition of your leadership in the role as Edmonton Branch Trustee, and now Branch President.

Special Mention Award – Courtney Laframboise, #6669, Edmonton Branch

In recognition of work done to refresh Edmonton Branch website and to accept the Board leadership role as Vice President.

President’s Award

Robert Franz #5741 – “In appreciation for excellence in support of our Society.”

Retiring Members of the Executive

Dwight Brown, #6140, Medicine Hat & District, April 2021 – April 2023 – With sincere thanks for your dedicated service as 2nd VP

Norma Wolowyk, #243, Edmonton Branch, April 2022 – April 2023 – Thanks to Norma Wolowyk for stepping up as Secretary to finish a term for Debra Wickham.

Alberta Heritage Awards – read and acknowledged, presented previously.

In 2022, AGS nominated the Archives group for an Outstanding Achievement Heritage Award offered by HRM Heritage Division. Since 1989, 34 years ago, an amazing group of volunteers from the Alberta Genealogical Society (AGS) has been providing ongoing service to Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA). People who are dedicated to facilitating the easy access and preservation of materials of interest to those who are researching family history. It is because of their thousands of hours of meticulous indexing, rehousing and vigilant attention to detail to 17 different databases over the years that the general public now has increased ease of access to historical information on Alberta families.

Norma Wolowyk, #243 (AGS 1975-2023)
 Pat Pettitt, #2342 (AGS 1989-2023)
 Claudine Nelson, #2592 (AGS 1990-2023)
 Doreen Dimitroff, #2673 (AGS 1999-2023)
 John Hazelwood, #2955 (AGS 1993-2023)
 Gordon Berdahl, #3138 (AGS 1994-2023)
 Joan Green, #3629 (AGS 1997-2023)
 Tony Locock, #3630 (AGS 1997-2023)
 Liz Kohle, #4914 (AGS 2003-2023)
 John Tedder, #5021 (AGS 2003-2023)
 Linda Cherepanik, #5219 (AGS 2004-2023)

On October 3, 2022, Norma Wolowyk, Claudine Nelson and John Tedder, on behalf of the entire group, received the Outstanding Achievement Heritage Award at the Queen Elizabeth II Building. Congratulations to a great team.

Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Awards – presented previously.

The Government of Alberta, Department of Culture, recognized nine of our members for their long volunteer service to AGS and their community in 2022 by presenting them with the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Medal. We too want to thank you for your service to the various organizations for which you volunteer. We especially appreciate your dedicated service to AGS over the years.

Laura Turnbull, #555, Edmonton Branch
 Clara Iwaasa, #1150, Brooks & District Branch
 Marion Rex Howard, #3341, Edmonton Branch
 yes
 Anke Krickhahn, #4433, Medicine Hat & District
 Brian Dunlop, #4537, Brooks & District Branch
 Anne Wildcat, #5469, Wetaskiwin Branch
 Lynne Duigou, #5510, Edmonton Branch
 Belinda Crowson, #5802, Lethbridge & District Branch
 Linda Renwick, #6720, Edmonton Branch

**Library & Resource Centre
 Claudine Nelson**



The Alberta Genealogical Society (AGS) has space for: the Office Coordinator and the Bookkeeper; Library holdings and furnishings belonging to the AGS Edmonton Branch and AGS; tables for researchers to spread out their papers which can be reconfigured to hold Special Interest Group (SIG)

meetings, Board meetings, etc.

The AGS Edmonton Branch volunteers donate their time to help members and non-members with their research. The Library is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and the third Saturday from 10 AM to 3 PM. We were fortunate that the volunteers and patrons continued to use Covid protocols using hand sanitizer. AGS Edmonton Branch opened their doors the first week of July during Edmonton's Historical Week *Doors Open* free to Non-members (instead of the \$10.00). Many 'Take and Donate' items were available which generated \$60.00.

Sadly, the news of the probable Dissolution of AGS Fort McMurray Branch was announced April 23, 2023. I was asked to be part of the Transition Team of 4. I offered to go through their lists of library holdings: books, periodicals, maps. The book holdings included over 2,000 items. Excel sheets of these were offered to all the Branches and I kept track of who was the first wanting specific items. I then passed those colored-up Excel page requests on to Tammy who had them boxed, labeled and ready to be taken by whichever Branch had made the request. Two newer lists were sent out after the initial requests were made. The Provincial Archives of Alberta were grateful to be offered the list of Alberta Local Histories that had not been requested by Branches. They added 57 Local Histories to their collection. There were 16 Local Histories not requested and these were divided between Red Deer and Lethbridge Branches. A couple of Branches were able to arrange pickup of their requested items while other taped boxed items came down to the Library for pickup prior to the September AGS Board meeting which is when the last were picked up.

AGS Fort McMurray President, Tammy Grantham and her team worked very diligently as they worked with me sorting and finding homes for all of these holdings.

At the **Celebrating 50 Years of Alberta Genealogy 1973-2023 Conference** on 23 September 2023, I had tables for 'Take & Donate' and sale of 'Local History books' that had been accumulating since the COVID lockdown in 2020. Thanks to Deborah and Bruce Boelstler who helped me with these sale tables. A total of \$1,425.00 was generated from the sale of accumulated Local History books at the Conference and to a private book seller.

There were a couple of smaller donations that needed to be sorted and processed. Items that were not of Genealogical relevance were taken to Alhambra Second Hand Bookstore, Edmonton.

Membership - Lynne Duigou



Membership Committee 2023 – Lynne Duigou, chair
Branches Representatives -
Brooks – Henry Najda
Calgary – Larry Eldreth
Camrose – Deb Trout
Drayton Valley – Connie Stuhl
Edmonton – Colleen Murray
Grande Prairie – Brenda Henning
Lethbridge – Barry Simmonds

Kieran Biggins

Medicine Hat – Teresa Parasynchuk

Red Deer – Jean Boxer

Wetaskiwin – Lee Koop

The membership committee met in February, June, August and November. The following were discussed.

- Multi-year membership – on further research it was rejected by the Board as not viable.
- Automatic membership renewal – is to be tried for one year.
- Updated website pages – Branches gave suggestions for new Membership page and Branch pages which were then implemented by the website committee.
- Membership fees for 2024 – Branches voted to support a change to a Basic membership with the

add-on of \$10 for print edition of *Relatively Speaking* and \$10 for each additional Branch. Board approved the change with no fee increase

- Cut-off date for membership renewal was established as December 31 at which time the benefits for online use of subscriptions and *Relatively Speaking* will cease.
- A new membership poster was developed and circulated to each Branch for their use.
- Colleen Murray of Edmonton Branch shared new membership videos she has developed.
- The Membership chairs asked that the AGS Finance Committee introduce, in the 2025 Budget, an increase in the amount received by the Branches for each membership purchased in 2025.
- Branches requested that in November and December they receive a complete Branch membership list every two weeks and once a week in January and February so that they can follow up with those who have not renewed their membership.
- The group reviewed the membership application form and made suggestions for changes before it is implemented October 1, 2023 for 2024 membership year. Those were implemented.
- The AGS Board sponsored a free membership for a draw from all memberships renewed before November 30, 2023. The winner was Mariann R #6445.
- The membership campaign began October 1, 2023. An advertisement was sent to all members, and placed on Facebook and in *Relatively Speaking*.
- 387/645 members renewed during the successful Fall membership campaign.

AGS thanks the Branch Membership Chairs for their commitment and diligence in maintaining their membership and attracting new members.

Policies & Procedures/Bylaws See 2nd Vice President report

Relatively Speaking - Kate Wilson



Volunteer Hours: 20

The Themes for 2023 were:

February – Celebrating Love

May – Alberta Rodeo, Round-Up, Pow wow

August – School Days

November – DNA / Genealogical Research

In early January 2023, I was approached by AGS to consider taking on the role of Editor for *Relatively Speaking*, which I was happy to accept. The contract was from January 15, 2023 – January 15, 2024, for an annual amount of no more than \$5000. The total editorial payment for 2023 was \$4522.50.

Starting mid January, I worked with Lynne Duigou on essentials such as formatting, scheduling the printing, requesting articles and other aspects of creating a quarterly journal. Together, Lynne and I published my first working issue, February 2023. From that point, I took on full editing responsibility and have been involved with publishing the May, August, and November issues of 2023.

That first February issue under the guidance of Lynne was a valuable learning phase, and I have continued to learn through interactions with the copy-editing team, with layout and with administration, both Jackie Pearson and currently with Shannon Cherkowski, in aspects of printing and mailing. I've also had the pleasure of building relationships with authors, and engaging with them has been a very beneficial learning opportunity during my first year. I have also had three video conferencing meetings with the copy-editing team.

The *Relatively Speaking* team consisted of Copy-Editing Team Marilyn Astle, Wendy Warren and Denise Daubert (Indexing); Layout Marie Vieira; and Mailing Team AGS/Library Volunteers who stuff the envelopes as well as Terry Terlesky who delivers the envelopes to the Post Office for mailing.

As it has for many years, the Edmonton Public Schools Printing Department continues to print *RS* for us.

Research Services - Norma Wolowyk



The **Research Services Committee** for both AGS and AGS Edmonton Branch began meeting each Friday at the AGS Library in 1999 and has continued to do so since that year.

During 2023 requests for copies of homestead records were handled by Claudine Nelson and Norma Wolowyk. 150 requests for copies of homestead files (145 in 2022) were completed in 2023.

Researchers interested in homestead records request copies through completing a request form on the AGS website. In 2023, I responded to requests from 415 researchers wanting copies of close to 687 files in total. A response is sent back noting the details of ordering copies of the homestead files from AGS and advising that the early homestead files (1870 to 1930) are on Ancestry and can be accessed through that subscription website. Only 126 of the initial 415 requests carried through and ordered copies of the files. Most of the people requesting copies of the early homesteads thanked me for the information and said they would access through Ancestry. Thus, the majority of files copied are from the post 1930 land file collections held on microfilm at the Provincial Archives of Alberta

I completed the history of the AGS Research Services 2014 to 2023 for submission to the Society's publication *Volume III Achieving Gold, Half a Century of Success: The History of the Alberta Genealogical Society 2013-2023*.

Thank you to Jackie Pearson (January to April) and Shannon Cherkowski (May to December), AGS Office Coordinators, for handling the mail, emails, phone calls and query payments for the AGS Research Committee. Their prompt and efficient attention to these matters was very much appreciated.

Retreat

Susan Haga



During this past year our scheduled September 2023 Retreat had to be postponed to September 2024 because of our AGS 50th Anniversary Celebration Conference being held this past September at the Edmonton Inn instead of our usual April Conference. So once again our deposit is

being carried over until September 2024 for the same amount of our original deposit. The Providence Renewal Centre has been very patient with us as we have had to keep postponing our Retreat due to the pandemic and then again this year for our AGS 50th Anniversary Conference.

Our next Retreat will be held in September 2024 at the Providence Renewal Centre, so we will have ample time to prepare for it. Hopefully, we will be able to hold a full Retreat starting on Friday, September 27th through Sunday, September 29th.

Webmaster

Deb Boelstler

Volunteer hours: 95

For the last several years, AGS offers online access to MyHeritageLibrary (this Library Edition costs the Society approximately \$3,000 per year adding great value to the AGS Member) and the ARNI (Alberta Records Name Index) database through the AGS website. The ARNI database with information from the master surname database has been available for member access since 2007. (See the 2022 Website Annual Report for more information regarding this amazing online resource with amazing contributions by Dwayne Holmberg of

Other Machines, our Research Team and other valuable volunteers who made this database available to the AGS Membership and from contributions from the Edmonton Heritage Council for the grant which enabled us to put this resource online.)

The AGS website Team consists of the following members: Lianne Kruger (Social Media), Deb Boelstler (AGS website), Deb Trout (Zoom Meetings) and Laura Turnbull (Facebook). The AGS Calendar had been looked after by Deb Trout but has since been discontinued. Shannon Cherkowski of the AGS Office also maintains a lot of the AGS website. Deb Boelstler and Shannon Cherkowski receive wonderful direction and assistance from Lynne Duigou, the AGS Past President. New Changes expected to the AGS website in 2024 with the assistance of Media Shaker, under the direction of Lynne Duigou. Lynne has provided the AGS website with a lot of talent in regard to various posters that eventually get posted to the AGS website along with her savvy well-directed advice.

Shannon Cherkowski and Deb Boelstler post reports to the members-only section of the AGS website. This makes the reports available for the Board Meetings every quarter. Deb Trout, Zoom coordinator receives requests for zoom meetings via email. We thank her so much for her amazing work. Lianne Kruger and Laura Turnbull, thank you for a great year of your Social Media Contributions.

For the first time in a few years, we managed to pull together as a team to submit and post updates regarding the 2023 AGS Conference. Lots of learning challenges along the way, but we managed to pull off another successful Conference.

Notes



2023-2025 AGS STRATEGIC PLAN

Bringing the past, to the present, for the future

VISION: AGS supports and encourages people to engage in accurate diverse genealogical research that enhances family connections and records family stories.

MISSION: AGS strives to be the trusted source of diverse genealogical resources and to provide proven genealogical methods through education, assistance, promotion, resource development, and collaboration.

VALUES:

Initiative: We celebrate and support people who are curious and take the initiative to research and record family history.

Research: We recognize and value proven methods and processes in effective genealogical research.

Community: We support one another in the pursuit of genealogical research and family history.

Respect: We welcome diversity and seek to find ways to support family history from all cultures.

STRATEGIC GOALS 2023-2025:

1. STRONG AND HEALTHY ORGANIZATION

- a. Enhance the organizational system of AGS to maintain a strong and healthy provincial organization
- b. Support and effectively engage current membership
- c. Attract and welcome new members to the Alberta Genealogical Society

2. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES – Provide educational opportunities that encourage and support diverse genealogical research

3. RESEARCH – Develop, maintain, and provide access to trusted sources for diverse genealogical research

4. COLLABORATION – Establish local, provincial, and national collaborative efforts to achieve our common goals

**Alberta Genealogical Society
Membership Statistics
for the year 2023**

Branch	Primary Branch	Other Branches Added	Added Branches	Total Branch Members	2023 New Members	Membership Type											RSE	RSP	Total Members
						I	F	S	S+	L	L+	ST	YD	MKS	HON				
AGS Only	41	0	0	41	21	16	0	24	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	31	10	42	
Brooks	16	3	0	19	0	3	1	8	0	4	0	0	0	0	9	7	20		
Calgary	7	1	0	8	5	3	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	8			
Camrose	19	6	0	25	0	2	2	14	1	0	0	0	0	16	3	28			
Drayton Valle	6	1	0	7	1	2	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	3	3	8			
Edmonton	365	13	2	380	49	81	4	231	27	16	4	0	1	218	147	417			
Ft. McMurray	8	4	0	12	1	3	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	6	2	16			
Grande Prairie	30	11	0	41	4	9	0	17	1	3	0	0	0	20	10	42			
Lethbridge	37	5	0	42	1	5	1	21	8	1	1	0	0	25	12	52			
Medicine Hat	55	4	0	59	3	12	1	32	9	0	0	0	1	42	13	70			
Red Deer	43	3	0	46	1	7	0	35	1	0	0	0	0	26	17	47			
Wetaskiwin	23	5	2	30	3	2	0	15	5	1	0	0	0	17	6	35			
Totals	650	56	4	710	89	145	10	405	56	25	5	0	2	1	1	418	232	785	

Legend

- Primary Branch: Memberships purchased with just one branch (Home branch)
- Other Added: Number of branches added by branch members (\$10 each)
- Branch Added: Members who have added this branch to their membership
- Total Member: Total Branch members (Primary + branches added)

Note: By adding Branch plus Home plus Associate equals Total Membership

	# bought	Cost per	Total \$ collected
I Individual Membership	145	50	7,250
F Family Membership (additional members in the household)	10	50	550
S Senior Membership	405	45	18,225
S+ Senior Plus Membership (Additional members in the household)	56	45	2,520
L Life Membership	25	--	--
L+ Life Plus Membership (Additional members in the household)	5	--	--
ST Student Membership	0	5	--
YD Young Adult Membership	2	25	50
MKS Margaret Kay Scholarship recipient	1	--	--
RSE the number of members in the branch preferring an electronic copy of RS	418	--	--
RSP the number of members in the branch preferring a printed copy of RS	232	10	2,320
Other branches added to membership	60	10	600
Membership Purchased			<u>31,515</u>
Membership		650	
Life & Life + Members		30	
Total Paid Memberships		<u>620</u>	
(Membership - (Life & Life Plus) = Memberships purchased)			



Alberta Genealogical Society

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Phone: (780) 423-8902 Email: agsoffice@abgenealogy.ca

Website: <http://abgenealogy.ca/>

2024 Branch Contact Information

<p>Brooks & District Branch President: David Clarke Box 1538, Brooks, AB T1R 1C4 Email: brooksags@gmail.com Website: https://agsbrooks.ca Meets 1st Wed monthly, 1:30 PM Public programs selected Saturdays* Brooks Public Library 323 1st St. East, Brooks, AB *Email for more information</p>	<p>Edmonton Branch President: Kurt Paterson Unit 162, 14315 – 118 Avenue Edmonton, AB T5L 4S6 Phone: (780) 424-4429 Email: president@edmontongenealogy.ca Website: www.edmontongenealogy.ca https://www.edmontongenealogy.ca/events</p>	<p>Medicine Hat & District Branch President: Deb Wickham Box 971 Stn Main, Medicine Hat, AB T1A 7G8 Email: mhgs@shaw.ca Website: mhdgs.ca Meets 1st Wednesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. Medicine Hat Monumental Co. Ltd., 974 – 13th St. SW, Medicine Hat</p>
<p>Calgary Branch President: Larry Eldreth c/o 83 Deerbrook Road SE Calgary, Alberta T2J 6G5 Email: agscalgarybranch@gmail.com Website: https://www.abgenealogy.ca/calgary Meetings –4th Thursday at 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Grande Prairie & District Branch President: Maxine Maxwell P.O. Box 1257 Grande Prairie, AB T8V 4Z1 Phone: (780) 512-6427 Email: president@grpr-abgenealogy.ca Website: www.abgenealogy.ca/grande-prairie-branch</p>	<p>Red Deer & District Branch President: Jessie Dial c/o 26 Piper Drive Red Deer, AB T4P 1H6 Email: rdbags@gmail.com Website: www.abgenealogy.ca/red-deer-district-branch Meets 3rd Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m. LDS Church 3002 – 47 Avenue, Red Deer</p>
<p>Camrose Branch c/o 6130 – 39 Avenue Camrose, AB T4V 3B1 Phone: (780) 781-5100 camrosegeneo@gmail.com www.camrosegenealogy.weebly.com Meets 3rd Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m. Camrose County Agricultural Services Building</p>	<p>Meets 3rd Wednesday in Jan, Mar, May & Oct, 6:00 p.m. Grande Prairie Public Library 101, 9839 – 103 Ave, Grande Prairie</p>	<p>Wetaskiwin Branch President: Alice Hoyle c/o 409, 1 Charis Village Drive Lacombe, Alberta T4L 0K5 Phone: (780) 352-2150 Email: wetaskiwin@abgenealogy.ca Website: www.abgenealogy.ca/wetaskiwin-branch Meets 3rd Tuesday (except July, August and December) 7:00 p.m. LDS Church, Wetaskiwin (Use NE Door)</p>
<p>Drayton Valley Branch President: Connie Stuhl P.O. Box 115 Rocky Rapids, AB T0E 1Z0 Phone: (780) 542-2787 Email: ags.dvbranch@gmail.com Website: www.abgenealogy.ca/drayton-valley-branch Meets 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6:00 p.m. Drayton Valley Library, 5120 - 52 Street, Drayton Valley</p>	<p>Lethbridge & District Branch President: Barry Simmonds Rm. 128, 909 – 3rd Avenue North Lethbridge, AB T1H 0H5 Phone: (403) 328-9564 Email: lethagsoffice@gmail.com Website: www.lethbridgeags.theboss.net Meets 3rd Thursday of the month 7:00 p.m. Provincial Admin. Building 909-3rd Avenue North, Lethbridge</p>	

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023

Alberta Genealogical Society – *Bringing the past to the present for the future!*

- Active since 1973, we celebrated 50 years as a Society in 2023.
- We published “***Achieving Gold Half a Century of Success – The History of the Alberta Genealogical Society 2013 – 2023***” and made it available to members.
- Conference 2023 celebrated AGS 50th Anniversary and featured 12 session speakers and Dave Obee as Keynote speaker. 149 members attended the conference in person; another 24 attended virtually.
- Conference Speaker sessions were recorded and placed on AGS YouTube channel for 90 days for conference attendees to view at their leisure.
- Membership for 2023 totalled 650 compared to 626 in 2022, 681 in 2021, 724 in 2020 678 in 2019.
- Members reported 25, 733 volunteer hours, an increase over the last three years.
- The Board approved a statement to formalize our Society’s ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity.
- The Board established the Google Workspace Steering Committee to modernize our operations.
- The joint project with Edmonton Public Library for digitizing Alberta cemetery data has converted a larger portion of texts which are now available on Internet Archive.
- The website renewal began in January with the intent to update and simplify the website and make it as user friendly as possible.
- More data was added to the Alberta Records Name Index (ARNI) which now has 1,039,779 searchable records.
- AGS continued to offer online access to MyHeritageLibrary and the ARNI (Alberta Records Name Index) database through the AGS website.
- Twenty-six Outstanding AGS Volunteers were honoured with certificates.
- Awarded – Two founding members plaques for 50 years of membership and awarded Long-term membership certificates for: three 50-year members, four members for 40 years of membership and twelve members for 25 years of membership. Three members received Life Membership Awards.
- 151 students received certificates for completion of Genealogy4Youth projects.
- 46 students received certificates for displaying their genealogy posters at the Art Gallery of Alberta.
- The Research Committee responded to 150 homestead records requests and 415 researchers wanting 687 files in total.
- We published four issues of *Relatively Speaking* including 6 first-time authors and 2 youth authors. Themes for the issues were: February—Celebrating Love, May—Alberta Rodeo, Round-up, Pow wow, August—School Days, and November DNA/Genealogical Research.
- The Policies and Procedures/Bylaws Committee continued their work, updating policies the Branch bylaws to bring them up-to-date regarding Dormancy and Branch Trusteeship.
- AGS secured funding through membership fees, donations, Casino, research queries and grants from the Edmonton Heritage Council and the Historic Resources Management Heritage Division.
- The Society continued to employ one part-time office coordinator and one part-time bookkeeper.

Proud beneficiary of the Historic Resources Management Heritage Division through the Government of Alberta, and the Edmonton Heritage Council through the City of Edmonton.

