



# Morleyville Settlement News

## John Laurie Remembered

*Although many Calgarians who drive John Laurie Boulevard are unaware of the road's namesake, members of the First Nations of southern Alberta have not forgotten their friend.*

50 years after his passing there was again standing room only in the McDougall church at Morleyville Settlement at the annual Fall Service dedicated to his memory. The service was conducted by Rev. Tom Melvin, Chaplin of the McDougall Stoney Mission Society and greetings were given by the chair of the society, Dr. Gerald McDougall.

The tributes included a brief biography of John Laurie's life by Don Smith, recently retired for the Department of History at the University of Calgary. Don's chapter on Laurie can be read by googling *Citymakers John Laurie*.



Photo courtesy of Mark Wiencki

Nakoda Stoney Elders, Wally Snow and Bill McLean,

Two Stoney Nakoda elders, Wally Snow and Bill McLean Jr addressed the congregation. Bill was one of the students who shared John Laurie's home while attending Crescent Heights High School where John Laurie taught. Bill said that on waking every morning he gives thanks to John Laurie. Wally Snow recalled John's efforts to assist with the Indian Association of Alberta. But most of all they remembered him as a person who was "A Man Just Like Ourselves".

Our thanks to Ian Getty who facilitated the native participation. The family of Gerald Tailfeathers of the Blood was also in attendance.

Excerpts from a poem written by John Laurie (see insert) were read by actor Grant Reddick who was a former student of John Laurie's. Cynthia Downe, daughter of "Otter Woman" and close friend of John Laurie also gave a tribute. She introduced Dan Davies who came from Salt Springs Island to attend the service. Dan was a teacher at Balmoral who was enlisted by Len McDougall to help in the restoration of the McDougall Memorial Church. An article written by John Laurie supporting the work of the McDougalls was reproduced for the service.



John Laurie in Stoney was named "White Cloud" and adopted by the Hunter Family.



Legendary climber, Chick Scott on the far left, led a hike to Raven's End on Mount Laurie (Yammuska) on September 12 to commemorate John Laurie.

Photo courtesy of Rachel Maclean Cochrane Eagle

Ruth Gorman who assisted John Laurie in the legal aspects of their work for the Indian Association was represented at the service by Neil Watson from Gorman Gorman Burns and Watson. Another guest was Patsy Parker, the godchild of John Laurie.

## Interpreters and Hosts Trek to Morley Flats and Sundre

*On October 4th after a successful season of hosting a myriad of visitors to the site, our interpreters and hosts will become tourists themselves as they visit the Sundre & District Pioneer Village Museum where we will endeavour to discover more about former Morleyville residents.*

The McDougalls had a large ranch up on the Red Deer River close to Sundre on what is known as *McDougall Flats*. They wintered their stock and cut hay there.

From the reminiscences of David's wife, Annie, we learn that in 1888 their daughter, Georgiana, had returned from Hamilton Ladies College. She went with David to Sundre. While there David ruptured his gall bladder and came home and called Dr. Lafferty. We also learn that Georgiana and May were often in charge of Sundre and that the Red Deer had very bad electrical storms which were not popular with the native people or the girls. Besides McDougall Flats there is also a McDougall Hall and McDougall Chapel.

From *Big Hill Country: Cochrane and Area* (a fantastic resource!) we learn that the Fletchers and Niddrie families were neighbours and close friends when they moved in 1889 to Morleyville. During a dry spell the area could not support the livestock. The wells and springs on some of the nearby ranches went dry. So in 1894 Arthur Fletcher, Lucius Coleman and William Niddrie gathered their livestock and drove them up to the "Big Red Deer". In 1899 Art Lucius Coleman returned to Morleyville, but the Fletchers and the Niddries never looked back.

We will be trying to find traces of these families on our explorations.

By coincidence the Museum also houses the "Chester Mjolsness' World of Wildlife". This is in keeping with the collection of our own David McDougall. Writing about a visit to Morleyville in 1880s William McCardell relates:

"His store (David's Trading Post was known as the Store) was a veritable trophy room, with the assortment of big and small game hides. Grizzly, Cinnamon, brown and black bear hides were there in abun-

dance in all sizes and ages. Many of them had been bought from the Indians, but there were numerous hides representing animals he had killed himself."

Frank White recorded David's exploits this way in his diary: "September 29th, 1882. cloudy and cold.



Everyone turned out for this photograph in front of the "Store" taken in 1885. David is underneath the "E".

Started in covered carriage with Major Walker, Mr. Brawning and Jas Cochrane to Morleyville, arrived there about noon, very cold. Dinner at David McDougall's and he told us: Ate carrots 3 feet long, and grizzly (sic) bear which he had shot, putting five shots into his heart and 2 near it. Bear then had enough life to kill ten men!"

From the web site of KSPS we learn that

"Chester Mjolsness retired from the lumber business and became a top-notch trophy hunter. For 30 years, Chester travelled the world in search of exotic animals to display in his hometown of Sundre, Alberta. Today at the age of 89, he continues to actively hunt around the globe. The Chester Mjolsness World of Wildlife Exhibit is home to nearly 150 animal mounts and has been described by many as the finest wildlife museum in North America."

We will be having a guided tour of the exhibit on the 4th but you can have a peak at the display at any

## Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the McDougall Stoney Mission Society will take place on Thursday, **October 29th** at 7pm in the Tatangi Mangi Room at St. David's United Church, 3303 Capitol Hill Crescent NW in Calgary. All members are urged to attend. If you would like more information on serving on the Board of Directors, contact the Nominating Committee through Kate Reeves at 403 809-7341.

### It's a Small World . . . but we need to check the "facts"!

I got the Morley Settlement News today and noted that the picture accompanying the Philippe Roy article was incorrectly identified. The picture is of (seated) Mr. Leslie Wood (HBC stationed at Edmonton, Athabasca Landing etc) and his wife, Nellie (daughter of George McDougall).

Leslie and Nellie never had children of their own, but they often had their niece, Nellie Young, live with them for periods of time. Nellie Young is the young girl standing between her aunt and uncle in this picture.

Nellie Young was the daughter of Harrison Young and Elizabeth (Libby), who was also a daughter of George McDougall. Nellie was my mother's mother, thus the Youngs were my mother's grandparents and George her great grandfather. When Nellie and her husband died after six years of marriage and five children, the youngsters were sent to live with relatives.

The Woods looked after the eldest girl (Monota) and the Youngs took in my mother (Elizabeth). Apparently Elizabeth was a popular name for these folks! The other three children (Fred and newborn twins) lived with Libby's other daughter, Edith, in Camrose.

Nellie Wood, Libby Young and another McDougall daughter, Elizabeth (Eliza) Hardisty married HBC men and never moved south to the Morley area when the rest of the McDougalls did. Thus this branch of the McDougalls became known as the Northern McDougalls.

Elizabeth Helen (Birdie) mis-identified in the picture was, as stated, a daughter of Harrison and Libby. She did indeed marry Philippe Roy who later became Canada's Ambassador to France. One of Philippe and Birdie's daughters married a coffee finca magnate from El Salvador and lived the rest of her life in that country. Fancy a McDougall that far away!

By the way, Birdie got that nickname when she was born in 1880 on a return trip from Morley. Libby had been visiting her mother and on the way home (accompanied by natives) ran into a blizzard. The baby was born in a buckboard near Wetaskiwin and the natives named her Snow Bird, hence the nickname. Cool, eh?

Some day I'll bring down all our photo albums etc and we'll have a docent meeting or something! I'd love to tell all the stories we have! :)

Hope your summer is going well. I really enjoy the Morley Settlement News - kudos to the editor! If I ever get lucky enough to return to live in Calgary, I'll know where to volunteer!

*from Linda Collier*



*This is the incorrectly identified photo that was taken from a website thus illustrating the necessity of checking information procured on-line.*

## ***The McDougall Stoney Mission Society***

The Society is the steward of the remaining portion (43.9 acres) of Morleyville Settlement where the Mission was located. The site is 27 km west of Cochrane on the 1A Highway and is a provincial historic site.

The vision of the Society is to promote a greater understanding of the story of the Settlement and its place in the history of Alberta and Canada through the interpretation of the site to the public.

These are interesting times to be a part of the Society. Join us in this historical adventure! Membership is open to all those interested in our work.

For more information, please contact  
Kate at (403) 282-8753 or kareeves@telus.net

**McDougall Stoney Mission  
Church at Morleyville Settlement  
The Spring Commemorative Service  
Sunday, June 10, 2010, 3:00pm  
All are welcome.**

## **Tim Wilson and Minnie McDougall**

*The Whyte Museum in Banff is currently exhibiting "A Way of Life, A Legacy to Protect: 100 Years of the Warden Service"*

One of the earliest wardens was Tom Wilson. In 1884, before becoming a warden, Tom met Minnie McDougall who was running a boarding house in Silver City known as "The Miner's Home" with her brother Moses. He was obviously smitten as they became engaged and were married in Edmonton the following year. The bride's two cousins, D. M. McDougall and Clara Hardisty, acted as witnesses. After their wedding the Wilsons visited their McDougall relatives at Morley. When Silver City dwindled to twenty souls, they moved to a homestead in Morleyville where they built a log home, stable and corrals.

When Tom started his guiding business in Banff he moved some of the horses he had raised on the Morley homestead there. The family moved to Banff in 1893 to be close to Tom's new business. In 1896 the family included Ada, John, Rene, Eddie and Bessie in their home near Banff Avenue and Buffalo Street. According to E. J. Hart author of "Diamond Hitch: the pioneer guides and outfitters of Banff And Jasper", this home had the reputation of being "where the latch string hung on the outside" because of the welcome an hospitality people received there.

*The exhibit is on at the Whyte until Novmeber15th. While you are there you will have a chance to view the story of the McDougalls included in "The Stuff of Legend: The Luxton Family in Banff and the Bow Valley"*

Not a Member? We would appreciate your support!

The McDougall Stoney Mission Society  
c/o Kate Reeves  
1615 7A St NW  
Calgary, AB T2M 3K2

Individual \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

Family \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

Donation \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please keep me informed via email. My email address is \_\_\_\_\_

A copy of the financial statements will be mailed to upon request.

# Memories of John Laurie

by Cynthia Downe

It is an honour for me to be here today as we share our memories of John Laurie.

I first met John when he was one of my teachers at Crescent Heights High school in Calgary. My brother was also one of his students and we remembered him always as our favorite teacher. Our admiration grew beyond the classroom in later years as we watched him devote the rest of his life to the cause he felt so vital. My mother was an active member of the Home and School Association at Crescent and she became acquainted with the teaching staff. She learned of John's keen interest in the First Nations of Alberta, and she asked if she could assist him in any way. So one day he drove both my parents to a reserve near Calgary where they witnessed a child being taken from his home to a residential school. That was all my mother needed to see so she began a series of visits to meetings of women's groups in Calgary schools, churches and community halls. The women she met were mothers who would understand the heartbreak of losing a child. She asked them to send telegrams to Ottawa protesting the terrible abduction of children from their homes. She also visited other communities in Alberta with the same message. Later on, as you know, there were results.

When needed, she also assisted John and Ruth Gorman in their huge effort to help them form the Indian Association of Alberta.

Our family appreciated the friendship we had with John and with the native families who adopted him. The Sarcees, as they were known then, also adopted my mother, giving her the name of Otter Woman. The name was part of their own history. There was a former Otter Woman who was known as a fierce fighter of her tribe, and they decided the name suited my mother. Walking Buffalo of the Stoney Nation was also her friend, and he had his own name for her. He called her the White Savage. She was proud of both her names.

After John retired from teaching he became a lay-reader for the Anglican Church. His doctor would

not let him drive, so I was often called upon to take him to small country churches to conduct services, where I became the organist. I remember one church in particular where there was a very old organ which I had to pump with my feet to get it going. As I did that one morning, a mouse ran out from under the organ. I tried not to panic, but there were two sets of prayers that day – from John at the altar and from me at the pipe organ praying that the mouse would stay away from me!

Another trip we made one day was to this church where Len McDougall had brought some of his friends to paint the roof and help with repairs. He was teaching at Balmoral School in Calgary at that time and one of the teachers on the staff there volunteered to help him. John heard about this and asked me to drive him here so that he could take pictures. As we watched, one painter on the roof slipped and fell to the ground. We ran over and asked if he was hurt or if we could help him. He just laughed and got up and went back up on the roof. We didn't know his name. I think it was two years later that I joined the staff at Balmoral School and there I met the teacher who had fallen off the roof. He is now retired and lives on Salt Spring Island, B.C. His name is Dan Davies and he is here today. When he heard about this service he decided to come to see how the roof is looking!

When John's health began to fail he had to give up his home and garden and move to an apartment. He had a lovely white peony bush and asked my mother if we would like to have it in our garden. It has flourished there for over sixty years and could be even older than that. When Don Smith visited me a few weeks ago, he saw the bush, and his comment was "John still lives." So today I brought some leaves from the bush for you to see as one more memory of John Laurie.



# Reincarnation

She who is my mother and is not my mother  
But to whom I am bound in the mystical union  
The union of spirit stronger and stranger  
Than the bond of flesh and blood  
And yet, weaker, for the pains  
By which she becomes a mother bind her  
Through life, through death and in the land of the Spirits  
She calls me and I go  
Home to the tepee.

On the day which the white man calls Christmas  
Long years ago White Cloud was born,  
Born in the Moon When the Deer Shed their Horns,  
Born on the day which the Crees call Big Sunday,  
To Red Cloud Woman and her man Spotted Eagle,  
Him who was chosen a Chief of the Stoneys.  
And the boy grew and became a great rider  
A rider, a hunter and roper of whom the people tell  
That he roped the young moose and the white-rumped deer  
And brought them back to the tepee  
Laid across his saddle.

When the Great Spirit saw this young hunter  
He called him to join His Band  
And White Cloud went to the Stoney warriors  
In the Land of the Spirits.

The lines grew deeper on my mother's face  
She laughed less and did not sing at her work;  
Her heart was heavy but her spirit was proud  
For she was the daughter of great warriors.

Because she did not complain but bore her grief  
In quiet, there came a day when she saw a stranger  
Come across the hills to the tepee.  
A voice in her heart said,  
"Take this man to be our son  
For in him lives the spirit of White Cloud."

Thus spoke the Great Spirit and she listened.

But the man's skin was pale and he did not know  
The way to the Stoney people for his mind was not opened.  
His spirit was dark, and alone, and struggled in its darkness.

But in his heart was there ever a longing,  
A loneliness that was never satisfied, an unhappiness  
Unceasingly aching as he wandered across the earth.  
He in whom  
Dwelt the soul of White Cloud, calling for the hills  
For the buckskins, the tepee, and the light of the campfire  
Because his spirit was dark and his eyes were not opened  
Dulled by the foolish ways of the white man  
Who struggles for the things  
That vanish from his hand while he holds them  
Not knowing why  
The Great Spirit had led him  
Across the world  
Ever searching,  
Never finding;  
Always the question and never the answer,  
Led him to the fires of the Eyathka,  
The mountain people,  
To the tepee and buckskin  
And good smoke of the campfire.

But the time now ended, and the testing was over.  
The Great Spirit spoke to the dull ears of this stranger  
Touched the dim eyes and lighted the dark spirit.  
Faintly at first, but ever louder  
Rising like the wind  
On the peaks of the Yam Nuska  
Came the voice of the Great Spirit.  
And from within  
The soul of White Cloud  
Cast off the thongs,  
The bonds of the white man  
And came  
To his people  
And to his mother.

Here was the answer.  
Over the boundaries of colour and race  
Swept the will of the Great Spirit.

There is no more wandering; the long trail is ended.  
My mother calls me and I go  
Home to the tepee.

By John Laurie  
Known among the Stoneys as White Cloud

Note: It is a common belief among the Stoneys that the soul, leaving one body, seeks another and takes possession of that new body, driving that new body back to familiar scenes, persons and activities.