

Morleyville Settlement News

Laura Oakander



The Society has lost a great supporter in the passing of Laura Oakander. Laura was raised in Peterborough, Ontario and met her future husband, Caroll (pronounced Carl) when he was east ski jumping. Laura resided in Banff while Caroll served overseas for four years in the RCAF during WWII. Their daughter, Margaret recalls that

they were stationed in numerous places across Canada before retiring back to Calgary in 1969.

Laura became associated with the McDougall Memorial Church Restoration and Maintenance Society (as it was known then) when it met at Riverside United Church in 1975 and has been the “heart” of our society ever since. Laura and her husband would often stay at the McDougall Stoney Mission site on the weekends with their motor home to greet visitors and enjoy the beauty of the area.

The Secretary and Treasurer of the Society for many years, meetings were often held in Laura’s living room. She would say “I’m meeting the boys” meaning Steven Wilk and Len and Gerald McDougall. Following the meeting she graciously provided “lunch”.

Having the welfare of the site always foremost, “Laura could also be a bit of a Sergeant Major”, Len McDougall recalls. “That is not right” she would say and insist that something be fixed. When the church was broken into Laura phoned at 11pm and said “You have to go right now!”

She also had a mischievous side. Len recalled an occasion when they were on site when a film was being

made. Seeing the actor’s “director’s chairs” were vacant Laura encouraged Len to accompany her and sit in the chairs. She also loved to assist with the weddings at the church and filled a photo album with the young couples she helped “start out”.

Laura lived life to the fullest. She was a real sports fan and enjoyed hockey, football and the Spruce Meadows events. She was a member of St. David’s United Church and was always on the lookout for a good prayer or hymn that could be incorporated into the Commemorative Services at the site. It was Laura who contacted the person in charge of the music and composed the Order of Service and arranged to have it copied. And it was Laura who had the stoves fired up, the coffee made, the doughnuts bought for each service.

Laura had a deep interest in local history and was a member of the Historical Society of Alberta and enjoyed the annual Christmas dinners. She was a member of the Calgary Field Naturalists and supported the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society. She delighted in the birds and animals to be found at the site. Laura remarked to David Ballard that the site “was a good place to appreciate nature and the person who made it.” She loved the serenity as well as the storms which she said “had a wild beauty about them.” She learned to read the weather signs while at the site much as the McDougalls must have.

The day of our spring service, **June 14th**, would have been Laura’s 92nd birthday. We will be unveiling one of the 14 interpretive plaques that are being installed on the site at the service. Laura would have been pleased and we know that she will be there in spirit.

Thank you Laura!

Letter to the Editor of the Calgary Herald

I have noticed in your issue of the 8th instant, under the heading, "Special correspondence from Morley", some items reflecting on the Stony Indians, in fact, charging them with killing other men's cattle.

I wish to say that such statements are without foundation, and are but the overflowings of big mouth fellows, who cannot bring a shadow of proof for what they thus rashly state.

I am indignant as any one at the action of the Indian Department in making an exception to these Indians. It is sheer ingratitude, not to say bad policy, on the part of the Government to thus treat these men, who have served them better and cost them less, proportionately, than any other tribe in the Treaty;

At the same time, I want the public to know the truth, that is that cattle and sheep, or any other property, are as safe in the vicinity of Morley to-day (though the Indians are unfed by Government) as in any part of the big North West.

It is a good thing for "Special Correspondent" that, as yet, our Indians do not take newspapers, or instead of the coolness of October, it might be warmer than midsummer for them.

John McDougall, Missionary, Morley

(from the Calgary Herald's 125 Anniversary Issue Dec 08)

Oct. 15, 1884



Our Guest Book

William L. Kent was born in 1908, which makes him one of our "oldest" supporters.

William has special memories of the area where the church is located as his father and mother met in 1901 while working at the Morley Orphanage. They were married in 1903. His mother, Mary Jane Wellwood taught sewing to the girls at the Orphanage. William tries to get to a service at the church at Morleyville Settlement once a year. He travels to Calgary by Greyhound bus and then gets a ride with a member of the Board.

William also attended the 100th Anniversary of the University of Alberta last September. He is the oldest living graduate, having graduated in engineering in 1931.

Our thanks to Don Stiles, who visited with William at the Anniversary and brought this to our attention.

Reminiscences

Dear Len,

Sorry I've been so long in answering your letter along with the newsletter about the old McDougall Mission Church at Morley which I found so interesting. Do you remember many years ago, we worked out on the church which was beginning to go into decline after many years of neglect—and I believe you were involved then with a group of United Church men who were trying to fix it up. painting, etc. Do you remember when we were up on the roof and I fell off? I was quite embarrassed, and not at all hurt—when a man and lady helped me up and asked if I was OK. Years later I found out the lady was Cynthia Dorone and the man was John Laurie, whom she had driven out for the day!

I'd like to enclose a cheque toward the great cause of keeping such a historic spot in Alberta history alive! I hope I'll see you when I'm in Calgary next.

Warmest regards,
Dan Davies

Karen Clark presents “The Four Elizabeths”



Karen Clark at our volunteer guides and hosts training session.

The Society was fortunate to have the expertise of Karen Clark, a present Morleyville Settlement resident and local historian, who shared her research at the spring Orientation for our volunteer guides and hosts.

We were blessed with one of the first sunny days in May and able to assemble outside the cabin. To add to the atmosphere, Karen treated us to samples of elk meat that had been dried by Paul Clark. We also had her homemade Saskatoon jam to spread on scones—set on Karen’s grandmother’s dishes and beautiful embroidered tablecloth.

Karen gave us the background of the idea of surveying an area into river lots. This seigniorial system originated in France and came to Canada by way of Quebec. The McDougalls introduced the system at Victoria Settlement and it is also found in the old maps of Edmonton. They brought the system here and the maps of the area show that it has been retained. One of the few, if not the only area, in Alberta.



The docents sampled dried elk meat and homemade saskatoon jam.

Karen has been researching the gravesites in the old Millward Cemetery—the Stoney Cemetery where Reverend George and his wife Elizabeth Chandler McDougall and buried. The Four Elizabeths portrayed in her presentation were Elizabeth Candler McDougall, Elizabeth Sibbald, Elizabeth McDougall Boyd (sister of George), and Elizabeth Barrett. Karen has a deep appreciation for these woman and through her research they have become very real to her. They have now become very real to us!

We learned that Elizabeth Chandler’s father had the first flour mill in Muddy York (Toronto) and her brother the first grist mill near Barrie, ON. Elizabeth later used her knowledge of milling to oversee the grinding of barley at Victoria Settlement. Mrs. Sibbald was the only woman to drive her own wagon when she went back with a wagon train to get supplies. Elizabeth, the sister of George, was “kindness itself, but very firm”. She was a healer and rode horseback to neighbours when her services were needed. Elizabeth Barrett, the school teacher, was extremely competent and able to handle a classroom of 50 children of various ages without speaking their language. She was also a poet. Karen has contacted the Methodist Historical Society in the United States in the hopes of procuring some of her poems.

The Society presented Karen with a container of flowers in appreciation for her contributions to our docent training. The docents were also given on tour of the “lower forty” by tour guide extraordinaire David Ballard and tips on guiding from Joan Lawrence.

With a visit from a prospective bride and numerous tourists who wanted a peak inside the church, it was a busy Saturday at the site. We are still looking for more docents so that the church can be open to visitors as much as possible during the summer. Training will be given throughout the summer. Contact Kate at (403) 809-73451 for more information.

The McDougall Stoney Mission Society

The Society is the steward of the remaining portion (43.9 acres) of the Morleyville Settlement which was the location of the Mission. It is located 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. Membership is open to all those interested in our work.

For information contact:

Dr. Gerald McDougall, President
(403) 282-3044
gmmcdougall@shaw.ca

Sunday, June 14, 2009, 3:00pm

The Spring Commemorative Service
at McDougall Stoney Mission Church

A Tribute to Laura Oakander
and the Unveiling of our Interpretive Plaques
All Welcome.

We would like to acknowledge
the generous support of
The Calgary Foundation.



Events of an HISTORICAL NATURE

- May 24 - Tour of the Canadian Museum of Making
- May 29 to 31 - Historical Society of Alberta Conference
- June 6 and 7 - Tour of 25 Churches in Lamont County
- June 13 - The First Cochrane Historical Homes Tour
\$20 per person (in advance)
- June 14 - Commemorative Service at 3pm
McDougall Mission Church
- June 25 - McDougall Stoney Mission Society Board Meeting
- June 27 - Get Together at the McDougall Cairn at Noon
(in Panorama Hills)
- June 28 - Opening of the Little Synagogue at Heritage Park
- July 5th - Jamboree and Country Craft Sale at Victoria
Settlement (off Highway 855 south of Smoky
Lake) Contact (780) 656-2333
- July 18 - Flower Festival & Strawberry Tea
at Christ Church in Millarville
- July 24 to August 3 - Historic Calgary Week
- TBA - A Climb Part-Way-Up Mount Yumnuska
- September 13 - Fall Commemorative Service at 3pm
McDougall Stoney Mission

For information on any of these events contact
Kate Reeves at (403) 282 8753 or kareeves@telus.net

or check out our website at
<http://sites.google.com/site/morleyvillesettlement/>

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.