



THE GYROLOG

THE GYRO CLUB OF EDMONTON

Club Charter No.15, July 29, 1921

**President-Sam Gruden, Past President-John Boyd,
Vice-President-John Mann, Secretary-Barry Walker, Treasurer-Gary Campbell,
Directors-Cliff French, Ari Hoeksema, David Dyck, Len Stevens
Database Administrator-John Ross, Gyrolog Editor-Fred Schulte**

DECEMBER 2013

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Those celebrating their birthdays in December are **Sam Gruden** on the 1st, **Ron Ramsey** on the 3rd, **David Dyck** on the 5th, **Larry Dobson** on the 16th, **Gary Campbell** on the 17th, **Bill Taylor** on the 20th and **Chuck Gerhart** on the 24th. Those celebrating their wedding anniversaries are **Cliff and Sharon French, 50 years** on the 20th and **Ari and Kathryn Hoeksema, 10 years** on the 31st.

Ruth Bowes and Margaret Fairbridge have new email addresses:

ruthbowes1@gmail.com

mfairbridge32@gmail.com

Doris Douglas has a new phone number: **780-577-5152**

Please remove **Marion Morstad's** address, phone number and email address from your roster on page 21.

That's What I Call a Friend by John Burroughs

One whose grip is a little
tighter,
One whose smile is a little
brighter,
One whose deeds are a little
whiter,
That's what I call a friend.

One who'll lend as quick as
he'll borrow,
One who's the same today as
tomorrow,
One who will share your joy--
and sorrow,
That's what I call a friend.

One whose thoughts are a little
cleaner,
One whose mind is a little
keener,
One who avoids those things
that are meaner,
That's what I call a friend.

One when you'er gone who'll
miss you sadly,
One who'll welcome you back
again gladly,
One who though angered, will
not speak madly,
That's what I call a friend.

One who's been fine when life
seemed rotten,
One whose ideals you have not
forgotten,
One who has given you more
than he's gotten,
That's what I call a friend.

More African Proverbs

If you are in hiding, don't light a fire.

One falsehood spoils a thousand truths.

The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people.

There is no medicine to cure hatred.

No one tests the depth of a river with both feet.

He who asks questions, cannot avoid the answers.

Knowledge is better than riches.

Children are the reward of life.

The teeth are smiling, but is the heart?

A little subtleness is better than a lot of force.

The friends of our friends are our friends.

Let him speak who has seen with his eyes.

Compiled by Charlotte and Wolf Leslau, Peter Piper Press, 1962

President Sam Gruden welcomed 74 Gyros, Gyrettes and guests to the **Annual Christmas Party** held at the Riverview Room of the Shaw Conference Centre on December 3rd. **President Sam** and **Larry Dobson** led the group in the singing of Cheerio. **Jim Lochhead** gave the Grace.

Our guest entertainer was **Amelia Kaminski**, a professional musician and fiddle instructor for over 35 years. Amelia played background violin and fiddle tunes before and after dinner.

The traditional carving of turkey's at each table was again the highlight of the evening with various levels of carving skills and speed exhibited. Thanks to our nine carvers!



Photo by Bruce Swanson

Cliff Revell Jack Little Sheldon Weatherby John Ross Chuck Gerhart
 Larry Dobson Roger Russell Tony Mazzuca Bill Taylor

Dick Nichols reports on the results of the Hockey Pool.

Game 4 November 25 Winners First Period Second Period Final

Oilers vs. Blackhawks

First	0	2	Rudi Lucas	Brock Cook	Maureen Dea
Second	1	4	Mike Matei	Brooks Ross	John Ross
Final	1	5	Gyro	Gyro	Gyro

Game 5 December 3 Winners First Period Second Period Final

Oilers vs. Coyotes

First	1	1	Morgan Burnett	Kennedy Brown	Rudi Lucas
Second	2	3	Bill Taylor	Mike Matei	Mike Matei
Final	2	6	Gary Campbell	Gyro	Gyro



Photo by Bruce Swanson

Amelia Kaminski

Game 6 December 7	Winners	First Period	Second Period	Final
Oilers vs. Flames				
First	0 1	Mia Scornaienchi	Mia Scornaienchi	Mike Matei
Second	0 1	Brian Scranton	Brian Scranton	Chuck Gerhart
Final	1 2	David Geddes	David Geddes	Gyro

Game 7	December 12	Winners	First Period	Second Period	Final
Oilers vs. Bruins					
First	0	3	Marilyn Nichols	Erin Lucas	Rudi Lucas
Second	2	3	Sheldon Weatherby	Alan Rusler	Chuck Gerhart
Final	2	4	Gyro	Gyro	Gyro

President Sam Gruden welcomed 36 Gyros and two guests to the December 17th luncheon meeting held at the Royal Mayfair Golf Club. **Jim Lochhead** gave the Grace and **President Sam** led the group in the singing of Cheerio.

David Burnett introduced his guest, **David Noble**.

Cliff Revell introduced our guest speaker, **Doug Kelly**. Doug was born in Alberta and raised on a farm in Saskatchewan. He returned to Alberta in 1968 after graduating from the University of Saskatchewan with a bachelor of science in civil engineering. After spending a few years in some unsatisfying jobs, a chance meeting with university friend **Ralph Young** got him into his lifelong career of land development. Doug's career started with Ralph Young at Melcor which led to opportunities with Markborough Properties, Stovan Developments, UMA Engineering and finally with Carma Developers, 1994-2007.

Doug spoke about his book which was published in 2009 entitled "**\$100,000 An Acre**", **A Candid History of the Land Development Industry in Alberta**. The title of his book, refers to what was a high price for raw land, land that was ready for development in Alberta when the market was strong. This price occurred twice in Doug's career, first around 1979 when real estate was going through a boom period, and then again in about 2005. Presently, raw land prices in the Edmonton and Calgary areas are well above \$100,000 per acre.

Before the Second World War and for a few years after it ended, the municipalities did all of the land development work. They not only

owned the land in many cases, but were responsible for designing the neighbourhoods and for installing all associated services such as sewer and water systems, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, pavement, street lighting and electrical poles. The demand for housing increased dramatically as a result of the 1947 Leduc oil discovery. Municipalities could not keep up with the demand for serviced lots. That's when certain entrepreneurs realized they could do a better job , more efficiently and cost-effectively in turning raw land into serviced lots.

Stan Melton was the first entrepreneur and land developer in the Edmonton area to plan and develop fully serviced residential lots. His company, Sillton Developments undertook the development of "**Mayfield**" within the Town of Jasper Place in 1954. The development agreement signed by Stan Melton specified that each lot would be serviced with sanitary sewer and water connections. However, most of the town at this time had no sanitary sewer or water. Mr. Melton later developed "**Lynwood**" in Jasper Place. Stan also saw potential in Spruce Grove, Leduc and Sherwood Park and again purchased raw land for the development of fully serviced communities. For over four decades, Melton Real Estate/Melcor Developments have provided serviced lots in the Edmonton Region.

The next entrepreneurs to make their mark in the Edmonton area were **Sandy Mactaggert** and **Jean de la Bruyere**, Harvard Business School graduates who saw development potential because of the discovery of oil in Leduc. They established **Maclab Enterprises** and purchased 41 lots in the **Dovercourt** subdivision that had been originally subdivided in 1913. The City of Edmonton provided all of the servicing, so the only risk was in the raw land, however they still lost money in the first year of 1954. Maclab then bought 89 unserviced lots from the city in the community of **Argyll**. These lots had also been subdivided in the 1900's and remained undeveloped until the mid 1950's. Maclab then moved on to develop the 300 acre **Gold Bar** Farm in 1957, which eventually contained 1200 homes. Their next development was the **Hermitage** neighbourhood in 1961. Maclab also purchased a large chunk of land from the Duggan family in the early sixties where the

Southgate Shopping Centre now sits. Forty acres were sold to Woodward's for the shopping centre. The balance of the land was developed by Maclab as the **Village of Southgate**, which became the largest multi-family project in the city at the time.

Eric Weidman started building homes in Edmonton in 1949 under the name of Wayne Construction. In 1961, he joined other developers to form Byland Developments which sought out raw land in areas such as Steele Heights and Londonderry and got the land subdivided. The city was still servicing the land at this time. Eric Weidman's unpretentious claim to fame is having built the first condo project in all of Canada in 1967. The **Brentwood Village Condominium**, a 56-unit townhouse project in Steele Heights was based on a condominium housing project in Honolulu, Hawaii. This venture required new legislation to be passed by the province. The CMHC (Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation) would not entertain financing without a market survey. The developers placed an ad in the Edmonton Journal and the response was outstanding, all units were sold out in three weeks. The two bedroom units sold for \$13,000 and the three bedroom for \$14,000.

Stan Alldritt was unconventional in many respects, but he was definitely a shrewd businessman. In 1946, he scrounged lumber for his first apartment block on 124 Street and 109th Avenue. Most of the lumber came from aircraft packing crates from Blatchford Field, Edmonton's first airport. Hundreds of aircraft were assembled at Blatchford Field at the height of Allied air force training in Western Canada, and Stan was there to pick up the unwanted crates. As a result, the cost of lumber for his first building project was minimal. Apartments were Stan's mainstay, and he developed a lot of them, approximately 6,000 units between 1960 and 1985. However, he also realized at an early stage that in order to be successful, one had to invest in raw land. In 1975, Stan's company **Alldritt Development**, comprised 18 subsidiary companies estimated to be worth \$350 million. Mr. Alldritt's philosophy was to involve his trades in his business. He set up virtually every tradesman he worked with their own business, with him owning 50%. He had a plumbing company, a lumber company, a

drywall company and a mechanical contracting company. These companies did Alldritt's homes first. Stan treated his trades fairly, and, in return the trades were very loyal to him, even in the tough times Alldritt suffered in the mid 1980's. Alldritt built a lot of homes in the communities of Lymburn, Aspen Gardens and Blue Quill.

Ches McConnell, a co-founder of **Nu-West** had an interesting and varied life. An engineering graduate from the University of Alberta in 1947, McConnell worked initially as an architect but was encouraged and backed by pharmacist, **Clifford E. Lee** to try the constructions business. After a number of test projects, **McConnell Homes** was established. Ches met **Ralph Scurfield**, a teacher in 1956 and pushed him to join up and help in housing development. A soon to be bankrupt company, Nu West in Calgary needed help and Ches and Clifford sent Ralph to Calgary and the rest is history. **Nu West**, under Scurfield's leadership, became a very successful housing developer in Alberta. McConnell homes continued to build homes in Edmonton and one of their house models developed in the community of **Lendrum** was the "Virginian" with 1163 square feet and priced at \$16,250 in 1961.

*(Editor's note): An endowment fund has been established by the estate of Clifford E. Lee within the Edmonton Community Foundation. **The Lee Community Playspace Fund** provides funding to enhance recreational and community building opportunities for children and their families through the development of community playgrounds and play spaces in the greater Edmonton area. The Gyro Club of Edmonton Fund (Edmonton Community Foundation) was established on April 15, 2008 and is combined with the larger Lee Community Playspace Fund.*

Doug Kelly completed his very interesting presentation by fielding numerous questions by the members.

The Free Lunch draw was one by **Cliff Revell**.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Regular Tuesday Luncheon Meeting, Royal Mayfair Golf Club, January 7th

Speaker: Bruce Hogle

Topic: 50 years of broadcasting history.

Contacts: Jack Little and Tracy DesLaurier

GYRETTE Meeting, Royal Mayfair Golf Club, January 14th

Time: 6:00 pm Cocktails, Dinner 6:30

Speaker: Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour, Associate Dean of Science, U. of A

Topic: "Women in Science, how far have we come?"

Contact: Elaine Douglas

Regular Tuesday Luncheon Meeting, Royal Mayfair Golf Club, January 21st

Speaker: Patrick LaForge, President and Chief Operating Officer, Edmonton Oilers.

Contacts: Allan Warrack and Roy Bennett

GYRO International Interim Meeting, Double Tree Inn, Tempe, Arizona, January 26-30, 2014

Valentines Party, Mayfield Dinner Theatre (16615-109 St),

February 11th

Feature Play: "The Death Trap", a murder mystery thriller.

Time 7:00 pm.

Cost: \$60 per person

Contacts: Gerry Glassford and David Winfield

GYRO International and District VIII Convention, Wallace, Idaho, June 15-22, 2014