

Princeton & District Museum & Archives MUSEUM NEWS

January/February 2017

princetonmuseum.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A new year is upon us and the Princeton Museum & District Museum & Archives Society looks forward to another successful year of projects and activities. Our Annual General Meeting takes place at 7 pm at the Museum on Thursday 16 March. We hope to see you all there! If your membership in the Museum Society has expired you can renew it at the meeting. If you are not a member you can purchase a membership for \$12 at the door of the Meeting.

I am pleased to announce that the Town of Princeton and the Museum have begun discussions about the future of the Museum. On February 1 the Museum's Board and the Mayor and Council had an initial meeting, which laid the groundwork for future discussions. What was apparent at this meeting was everyone's love of and concern for the Museum. At the meeting we all got to know one another better and had an opportunity to share our respective visions for the Museum. We agreed that building a strong, collaborative relationship between the Town and the Museum will require much thoughtful work and that the February 1 meeting was the first step towards a fruitful collaboration. We plan to meet again in the spring and will keep you posted.

On a sadder note, we regret to report that Solana Allison had a serious fire in her house early in January. The house sits on the old Allison family homestead and contained furniture and documents pertaining to Allison family (and therefore Princeton) history. The Princeton Museum's manager, Robin Irwin, has been working with Solana to help salvage some of these precious items. We wish Solana all the best and look forward to having descendants of Princeton's founding family once more happily ensconced on their old home turf.

- Rika Ruebsaat

Message from the Editors

Welcome to the first Museum Newsletter of 2017! One of the pleasures of putting together this Newsletter is reading through old issues of the *Similkameen Star*. As you can see from the 1901 New Year's ball description, people really knew how to party back then. Maybe Princetonites should have a masquerade ball next New Year's Eve and revive the old tradition.

Even in the depths of winter the Princeton Museum is busy (see "Museum Happenings"). The Museum's connection with Princeton Secondary School over the past few months has been particularly gratifying.

Rika Ruebsaat & Jon Bartlett

The first New Year's edition of Princeton's first newspaper, The Similkameen Star (founded in March 1900) was published on January 5, 1901. A traditional New Year's celebration throughout what was then the British Empire was a masquerade ball. In honour of our own New Year of 2017, what follows is a description of Princeton's 1901 New Year's Masquerade Ball.

NEW YEARS SOCIETY HAPPENINGS

A large and most jolly combination of merry maker congregated early on New Year's Eve, at Mrs. S.L. Allison's home in response to invitations to a bal masque. Great preparations had been made to welcome the visitors in right royal style, and that they were successful was evinced on every hand by those present. Many were the gorgeously and fantastically arrayed gallants with their equally mysteriously dressed lady companions who vied with each other in their attempts at fun making frolics. After keeping everyone on the qui vive as to "who's who?" until the old year and old century was waning, the guests were bid unmask to welcome the coming in of the New Year and century and most sumptuous supper. This was followed by a short conversational spell, after which the dance continued until an early hour in the morning, That the evening's entertainment was a great success in every way goes without saying, and will long be remembered by those who attended. Those who masked were as follows:

Mrs. Richter – Dancing Girl; Mrs. Bell – Old Mother Hubbard; Miss Elsie Haegerman – Night; Miss Emily Haegerman – Queen of Hearts; Miss Minnie Heagerman – Winter; Miss Eva Woodward – Popcorn; Miss Carrie Allison – Grecian Lady; Miss Louise Allison – Old Maid; Miss Angela and Master Harry Allison – Two Little Girls in Blue; Mrs. Lawrence – School Girl; Mrs. Norman – Coloured Lady; Mrs. Schisler – School Girl; Mrs. Ed Allison – Bride; Miss Alice Allison – Imp; Mr. Schisler – Sailor; Mr. E. Thomas – Black and White; Mr. B Thomas – Poker Hand; Mr. W. Thomas – Pretty Girl; Mr. B Irwin – Clown; Dr. .A. Whillans – Uncle Sam; Mr. George Allison – English Squire; Mr. Alfred Allison – Rebecca Brown; Mr. Charles Richter – English Dude; Mr. Arthur D. Hill – Shirt Waist Man; Mr. Victor Ryder – Fairy; Mr. H. Webb – Spanish Cavalier; Mr. Ernest Woodward – Similkameen Star; Mr. W.S. Wilson – Sweet Sixteen.

Those who were not masked were: Mr. and Mrs. Hunter, Mr. and Mrs. Murdock, Mr. and Mrs. Haegerman, Mr. and Mrs. Harris, Mr. and Mrs. Hardwick, Mr. and Mrs. A. Oerlich, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Gulliford, Mrs. Allison, Miss Dundas, Messrs. E. and W. Allison, Judge Murphy, F Oerlich. W. Knight, E. Price, D. Ross, C. Thomas, Jas. Wallace, A. Bell, J. Budd, G. McAlpine.

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A portrait of the Men of Princeton. Identified are; Left 2nd row sitting Sam Gibson, with dog left, Luke Gibson. Far Right standing, Charlie Dav. Seated far right. Bill Knight.



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The guest list looks like a "who's who" of local prominent citizens with the Allison family and their many offspring outnumbering everyone. The costumes are certainly intriguing. How would someone dress up as "Night," "Winter," "Popcorn," "Imp," "Poker Hand," "Shirt Waist Man" or the "Similkameen Star?" And who in the world is Rebecca Brown?

People must have had a lot of stamina in those days -- supper wasn't served until midnight; it was followed by a "conversational spell" and then the dance continued until "an early hour in the morning." Not only that, the New Year masque was followed by another party the very next night, also described in the same issue of the Similkameen Star:

New Years Night Social Hop

An informal dance took place on New Years night in the Harris-McIntosh hall. Music was supplied by Messrs. Knight and Revely. Most of the merry makers who had visited the Allison home the evening previous were present, and although they had danced the New Year in, were still like Oliver Twist crying for "more." Dancing was kept up with great spirit until midnight when the happy throng wended their way home to the arms of Morpheus with the certainty that they would not woo him in vain.



Princeton Hotel



Humour from the Past

A canny Scot was sitting in the smoking compartment of the train and, after filling his pipe he turned to the man on his left and asked, "Hae ye a match?"

The man went through his pocket and said, "I am sorry, but I have not."

Turning to the man on his right he asked the same question and after a search the man said, "I am very sorry but I have used my last one."

"Ah, weel," said the Scot with a sigh as he reached into his own pocket, "I'll hae ta use one o' my ain."

Similkameen Star 15 October, 1915

The Museum now has no regular opening hours until March. If you wish to visit the Museum this winter please phone the Museum's president, Rika Ruebsaat, at 250-295-4006 and she will happily give you a tour.

Despite not being open every day, the Princeton Museum has been very busy. In December Princeton's Scout Troop visited the Museum where they explored the archives and spent a lot of time examining our extensive collection of fossils and dinosaur bones.

The Museum has begun a collaborative project with the Princeton Secondary School woodworking teachers, Lawrence Newman and Shane O'Malley. Under their supervision students will build 60 wooden drawers to house the Museum's fossil collection. Work Experience students together with volunteers will do the building using materials donated by Weyerhaeuser. This wonderful collaborative project has been spearheaded by volunteer Kathy Simpkins who has worked tirelessly reorganizing and renovating the Pollard Fossil research space in the basement.

Late last year the editor of the *Similkameen Spotlight*, Andrea DeMeers, spoke to the Museum's president about the possibility of a regular historical column in the *Spotlight* using photographs from the Museum's archives. Andrea and Rika have identified some themes for historical columns and the *Spotlight* hopes to begin publishing them soon.

At its meeting in December the Museum board established a fundraising committee. One of its first projects will be a trivia night to be held at the Legion in March. We will share information about the event as it emerges. Details will appear in the next edition of the *Museum Newsletter* (March/April).

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

When the Museum opens to regular off-season hours in the spring we will need volunteers to welcome visitors. Last fall we were blessed with a group of reliable volunteers who helped keep the Museum open. Thank you to:

Jon Bartlett, Kathy Clement, Kay Coghlan, Gail Conroy, Ken Heuser, Evelyn McCallum, Johanna Nott, Sharon Percival, Rika Ruebsaat, Lori Weissbach

If you would like to help out at the Museum we would be delighted to hear from you. Please call Rika at 250-295-4006