

SELF-GUIDED

HISTORICAL

CEMETERY WALKING TOUR



WORLD WARS I AND II
GRANDE PRAIRIE CEMETERY



PRODUCED BY

SOUTH PEACE REGIONAL ARCHIVES

Introduction

For several years, South Peace Regional Archives has run historical walking tours of cemeteries around the South Peace. The theme of this booklet is World Wars I and II. Each story has some connection to one or both of the wars, whether the person was a veteran, or their life was affected by the wars in some other way.

The full tour takes approximately 1.5 hours to complete. It may be done in sections over several visits, out of order, or skipping some stops. A map in the centrefold shows the location of each stop.

The Grande Prairie Cemetery (84 Avenue and 112 Street) has two sections, East (new) and West (old). This tour covers selected graves in the old section and one in the new section. As you walk and read, look for connections between the people on the tour. It is interesting to note how often they were involved in each others' lives.

We hope you enjoy learning more about the people and events that have made this community what it is today. If you have any questions, please contact or visit us.

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The purpose of SPRA is to gather, preserve, and share with the public records in any format which reflect the history of the area.

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Preserving and Sharing the Past

Stop 1 - Field of Honour (Row 21)

The Grande Prairie cemetery has a couple of sections designated "Field of Honour" where there is a large concentration of similar stones bearing Canadian national and regimental symbols. These are provided to veterans of Canada's armed forces in recognition of their service to the nation. Not all veterans have this style of stone and neither are all veterans buried in the "Field of Honour" sections.

Many men and women from the Grande Prairie area participated in the great conflicts of the last century. Grande Prairie's first volunteers for World War I had to travel out, often on foot, to enlist and usually signed up in Edmonton, Calgary, or their own Eastern hometowns. A recruitment drive went through the Peace Country in June 1915 stopping at Beaverlodge, Lake Saskatoon, Grande Prairie, and other places. Other recruitment drives followed. Conscription started in 1917 and Grande Prairie continued to send more men. Even members of the clergy joined up, including Canon Frederick Smith, Reverend Hugh Speke, and Father Josse. Beyond just affecting the lives of those who served and their family and friends, the War also had an impact on the Grande Prairie area as a whole. In 1918, the Soldiers Settlement Board was established and each veteran was allowed two quarter-sections of land and loans for seed grain. Many decided to take land in the Peace River Country.



*Top, scene from the trenches, 1916.
SPRA 194.02.*



*Top, a young boy watches a D- Company Army training exercise in Grande Prairie, ca. 1942. The courthouse is visible in the background.
SPRA 0254.14.*

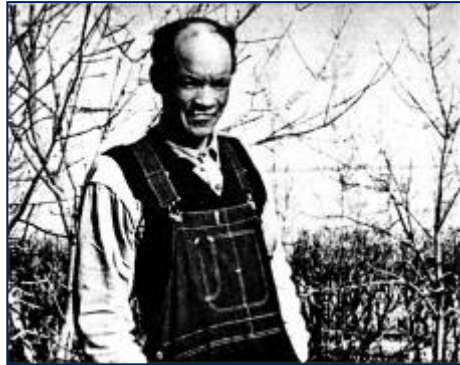
The first World War II recruitment drive in Grande Prairie occurred April 1940, although many had already traveled to Edmonton and elsewhere to enlist. Dr. O'Brien helped perform the medical examinations. Recruitment continued over the next years of the war. As of October 1940, the Peace River region had topped all others in Alberta for number of enlistees. Also in 1940, a reserve militia training centre was established in Grande Prairie and by 1941, as recruitment continued at high levels, a separate unit of the 2nd Battalion of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment was established, D Company.

Many women joined the Women's Auxiliary of D Company or the Canadian Women's Army Corps, became nurses, or joined the workforce.

The Training Centre closed in 1944, although the D Company Reserve Unit still occupied the Armoury. Once again, under the Veterans Land Act, veterans were each eligible for a half-section of land and many chose to come to the Peace Country.

Stop 2 - Cyril Mervyn Clarke (21-26)

Cyril Clarke's grave is unmarked, but it is situated between Kerr, left, and Botting, right. Cyril Mervyn Clarke was born August 6, 1882 on St. Vincent's Island in the West Indies. His father was an Anglican minister and his mother West Indian. He attended Oxford University and was a classmate of Winston Churchill.



Above, Cyril Mervyn Clarke. From *Wagon Trails Grown Over, Sexsmith to the Smoky Historical Society (1980)*, p. 993.

About 1910 he immigrated to Canada and when war broke out he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He spoke several languages and served as an interpreter in France during World War I.

After the war, Mr. Clarke took a Soldier's Settlement Grant in the Teepee Creek area. He soon discovered that farming made his asthma much worse and began concentrating on growing vegetables and flowers instead. As a black, highly educated, lifelong bachelor, and non-farmer, he was not the norm at Teepee Creek.

Cyril soon began specializing in peonies, about which he was passionate. The conservative estimate is that Mr. Clarke tested

about 2000 cultivars over his thirty years of collecting. He was a regular contributor to the American Peony Society bulletin and a leading authority on peony hybrids.

As he aged, Mr. Clarke began to lose his sight and his gardening friends persuaded him to move closer to Grande Prairie. They packed up his peonies and sent them to various homes. Large collections went to the Beaverlodge Research Station and the Devonian Botanic Garden near Edmonton and his records and 921 specimens were donated to the Department of Horticulture at the University of Alberta. The University grounds are still beautified with Clarke's peonies.

Mr. Clarke himself was given a home on Dr. Gurth O'Brien's land, where he had a garden spot of good, well-cultivated soil beside O'Brien Lake. Mr. Clarke passed away at his home in December 1952, at the age of 70 years.



Right, peony border at the Beaverlodge Research Station, 1956. SPRA 383.01.07.012.

Stop 3 - Norman William Erskine (21-09)

Norman William Erskine was born July 29, 1913 and was the son of Helen and William Erskine. Helen and her two children moved from Oregon in November 1916 to live with her brother near Flying Shot Lake while her husband was serving in World War I. Unfortunately, William was killed at Vimy Ridge in 1917. Helen filed on a homestead near Dimsdale in 1919 and married Duncan Bain. The family, now including four children, moved to the Millarston district in 1925.

Norman attended the Vermilion School of Agriculture and married Netta Stephen, who was also from the Millarston area. The couple had four children, two boys and two girls. A Gunner in the Royal Canadian Artillery during World War II, Norman was died in the military hospital in Halifax after an attack of appendicitis in August of 1941 at the age of 28. He was given a military funeral conducted out of Forbes Presbyterian Church. His pallbearers were from various platoons at the local training centre and the funeral was succeeded by a procession to the cemetery, the last post, and a three-round salute. He is buried beside a Dennis Norman Erskine, 2 years old, who was perhaps his young son, and his wife, Netta.



Below left, troops standing in formation in front of the row of "H" huts, ca. 1941, at the Grande Prairie Army Training Center. SPRA 2001.44.43. Below, Forbes Presbyterian Church, ca. 1933. SPRA 284.03.04.



Stop 4 - Gabriel Basly (13-14)

Gabriel (Gaby) Rene Basly was born on March 28, 1885 in Gennevilliers, France, a district on the Northern edge of Paris. He was the seventh child born to Jules Alexander Basly and Amelie Marie Lecouvreur. His father was "chef d'atelier d'entrepreneur," a shop foreman in an artisan type workshop. Gaby's mother had been a widow when she married Jules Basly and already had two daughters, Leontine and Blanche.

When he was 15 years old, Gaby was apprenticed as an electrician to the Railway Company of the West (Compagnie des Chemins de Fer de L'ouest) at Champs de Mars, a rail station in Paris, south of the Eiffel tower.

At the time, young men in France were required to serve in the army for three years, so at the age of 21, Gaby enlisted in an infantry unit at Caen, County Calvados, where he was living with an older brother

who was his guardian since his parents had died. When he immigrated to Canada in 1907 with his step-sister Blanche and her family, he notified the French Government about his move and inquired about his army status.

Gaby and Blanche’s family, the Piverts, took out homesteads in Big Valley, Alberta, about 67 km east of Innisfail. Gaby filed on part S.E. 16-36-9-W4th in 1907 and received his patent for proving up on the homestead in 1911.

In August 1914, Gaby was informed by the French Consulate that he should report for mobilization with his army corps, so with several other young men from Big Valley who were also French, he made his way back to France. He was placed in the 17th Company of the 302 Infantry Regiment, and in August-September of 1914 fought in the Battle of Lorraine, which was a disaster for the French. During the next year, the 302 Regiment lost so many of its soldiers that it was dissolved and Gaby was moved to the 311 Infantry Regiment, just in time to fight in the Battle of Verdun (June 1916), where he served as a message carrier.

It was in the Battle of Verdun that Gaby earned his “Croix de Guerre,” an award for bravery. The citation reads, “Basly, Gabriel No. 1156, of 7075 13th Comp. has assured communications with the company, with the greatest disdain for danger under a bombardment of the most violent kind during attacks on the 15th, 16th and 17th of June 1916.”

Again, because of heavy losses, Gaby was transferred again to the 255 Infantry Regiment and in April 1917, he was granted permission to travel back to Canada on a three-week leave.

Gaby never went back to the war. His relatives and friends from Big Valley, who had also returned to France at the outbreak of the war had all decided that they would be fools to return. They had given three years of their lives and lost many good friends and former neighbours from Big Valley. Gaby settled back into farming, and in 1926 headed for Grande Prairie with the Pivert brothers (Blanche’s nephews) to start a new life. There he acquired many horses, working the land with them in the summer and hauling coal in the winter. He also worked as a “Bull Cook” for a lumber camp at Big Mountain.

Gaby died on May 4, 1966 at the age of 80 years.



Above, Gabriel Basly and comrades at Martin-court having dinner in the trenches, ca. 1914. SPRA 0164.01.17.

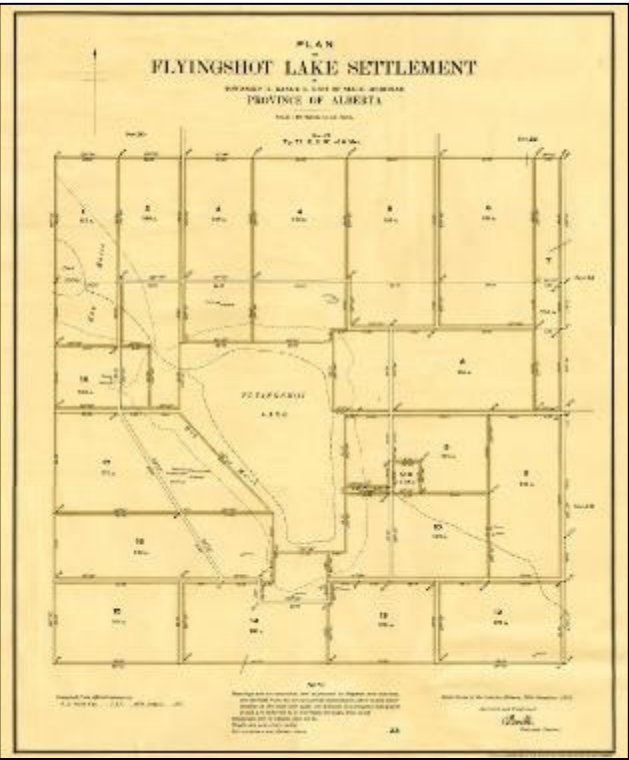


Gabriel Basly in his soft-top car, ca. 1925. SPRA 0164.01.20.

Stop 5 - Julia Campbell (11-19)

Julia’s grave is unmarked, but is situated between Edwards, left, and Kaspro, right. Julia or Julienne Gauthier was born at Fort Edmonton or Lac St. Anne about 1860. The family was French-Cree Metis and her father, Joseph, was an herb-healer. She grew up at Lac Ste. Anne. There were no schools and they lived the traditional lifestyle.

At about 16 years of age, Julienne married 18 year old Alexis Campbell, an Iroquois-Cree Metis born at Lac St. Anne and whose parents were from Jasper House. Soon after their marriage, the Gauthiers and the Campbells began the trek north. First they traveled east to Jasper, where her first son Albert was born. From there they took the ancient pack trail, later called the Hinton Trail, through Grande Cache, and into the Red Willow District.



Above, plan of the Metis settlement at Flyingshot Lake, 1908. SPRA 437.01.01.

Campbell and Gauthier families gave up their land grants and moved to Kelly Lake. Alexis died Kelly Lake in 1930, at the age of 73. He is buried at Rio Grande. Julienne lived in her later years with one of her daughters at Grovedale and at Grande Prairie. She passed away when over 100 years of age and was interred here in 1961.

When they arrived on the Grande Prairie in 1878, they were the first Iroquois Metis to live there. The Campbells built a log home east of Flying Shot Lake along Bear Creek, approximately where the Southview IGA is now, and here Alexis planted a small garden. They lived almost entirely on meat and berries. Even brown flour was a rare luxury, brought in from near Edmonton by dog team.

In 1892, Alexis and Julienne moved to the south shore of Bear Lake, where they received a land grant when it was surveyed in 1909. The 1901 Census lists Alexis and Julienne as living at Grand Prairie with their 11 children, and Louis Campbell, Alexis’ father. By 1911, five more children had been born, making 17 children in all.

In the early 1920s, when the population of the Grande Prairie was exploding with returning soldiers and new immigrants, the

Stop 6 - Wilfred Derocher (10-73) and Raphael Klein (10-69)

Wilfred Derocher and Raphael Klein were good friends from the Webster-Badheart area north of Sexsmith. In 1944, when they were both 18 years old, they joined a forest fire-fighting crew in that area. They were assigned to protect the Sanborn Lumber Mill north of Webster along with another teenager, three older men, and the mill workers.

The fire was coming from the direction of the Badheart area. Because of extremely high winds, the fire spread quickly in the tops of the trees and then spread to the ground when the burning branches fell. Even with all their efforts, the firefighters and mill workers soon realized they would not be able to stop the fire. They decided to save themselves by going down to the creek where the water was dammed.

Because of the heavy smoke, they soon lost track of each other as they groped their way down to the creek. When the worst of the fire had passed by and the smoke began to clear, the group realized they were missing the three young firefighters.

One of the young men survived the fire and told what happened. All three had started to run away from the fire instead of to the dam. The survivor looked back and saw that Raphael had fallen down and appeared to be unconscious. Wilfred went back to rescue his friend and both perished in the fire. They found the bodies the next day, about 10 yards from the mill site clearing. Wilfred was found lying over Raphael, attempting to shield his friend.

A joint funeral was held for the two friends from St. Joseph's Church in Grande Prairie and was attended by high school classes of St. Joseph's High School. The school choir also participated. Wilfred and

Raphael are buried here within meters of each other, although Raphael's grave is unfortunately unmarked.

The sadly ironic part of the story is that Wilfred's brother, Edmond, was already fighting overseas in WWII. He had discouraged his younger brother from enlisting, although Wilfred had wanted to, because he thought Wilfred was too young and might get hurt.



*Wilfred Derocher, ca. 1940.
SPRA 2010.26.*



*St. Joseph Separate School
(above) and St. Joseph Catholic
Church (right), ca. 1937. SPRA
032.08.07.11-12.*



Stop 7 - Dr. Lewis J. O'Brien (06-07)

Dr. Lewis James O'Brien was born near Toronto on November 28, 1868. He was educated in Toronto, taught for awhile, then received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Toronto. He traveled to Germany where earned his MD from the University of Wurtzburg. He did post-graduate work in Germany, Austria, England, and the United States. On his return to Canada, he practiced for awhile in Nanaimo, British Columbia and married Miss Alice John from Extension, BC.

When World War I started, Dr. O'Brien went overseas with the Canadian Army Medical Corps and served in the tent hospitals of Salonika, France, Egypt and England. The O'Briens came to the Peace Country after the war in 1918, during the Spanish Influenza Epidemic. When he arrived in Grande Prairie there was only a log mission hospital built in 1914 with 18 beds and a staff of one nurse and one ward aid. These two staff were on duty 24 hours a day and responsible for not only for the nursing, but also for the cooking, cleaning, and laundry. The operating room equipment consisted of a wooden table and a coal oil lamp. During surgeries Dr. O'Brien acted as both anaesthetist and surgeon and often travelled long distances over undeveloped roads to operate on rural patients.

Dr. O'Brien actively promoted the idea of a community hospital and slowly it came into being. First a local carpenter built a new operating room in lieu of paying his hospital bill; then the Ladies Hospital Auxiliary purchased the only X-ray machine north of Edmonton. By 1922, Hospital District No. 14 had been formed and the hospital was taken over by the municipality of Grande Prairie. In 1929, the hospital district was expanded and a large, modern, well-equipped new facility was constructed immediately east of the pioneer log hospital.



*Above, the Kathryn Prittie Hospital in 1916.
SPRA 2001.01.108.*



Both Dr. O'Brien and his wife Alice contributed generously to the community of Grande Prairie and were active in civic and volunteer affairs. He served on the school board and was president of the Alberta Medical Association from 1939-1940. He was also an MLA for four years during the 1940s.

The O'Briens raised five children, Herbert, Hugh, Gurth, Eric, and Margaret, and were avid naturalists. O'Brien Provincial Park, on the bank of the Wapiti River, is named after them. Dr. O'Brien was also involved in the campaign to have the Kleskun Hills declared a public park. Dr. O'Brien passed away in 1955.

Left, Dr. and Mrs. O'Brien in the yard of their Grande Prairie home, ca. 1940.

Stop 8 - Henry Henderson (04-23)

Captain Henry Edward Henderson was born about 1859 in Nova Scotia. He was a sailor for a number of years as a boy and young man. In 1876, he left home and worked in Boston and New York for a couple of years before moving to Colorado, where his brother Robert was. The two worked as carpenters. Bob returned to Nova Scotia and married, while Henry built and ran ferries. In 1890, Henry travelled north to Alaska and by 1893 was on his way to the Yukon, following the route from Dyea that many of the Klondike Gold Rushers later took. Once in the Yukon, he took various jobs, mostly transporting goods and raw material on the rivers. Late that winter he made the long, hard trip back out and to Nova Scotia, where he married Jennie Grant in 1894. He stayed in Nova Scotia farming and fishing for the next four years and he and Jennie had two children: Isabel and Norman Robert. While there, he received a letter from his brother Bob describing a find of gold near the Klondike River. It was this 1896 strike that contributed to the famous Klondike Gold Rush of 1898.

Henry decided to return to the Yukon in the fall of 1897 and was part of that rush. Again, he worked various jobs and left the Yukon in the fall of 1898, returning to Nova Scotia and his family. In 1900 he went back to the Yukon and piloted scows from Lake Benet to Dawson City and other places in the Yukon. Even through these dangerous waters, he had the enviable record of never losing a scow or wrecking a boat. In 1911 he got his captain’s papers and ran various boats, finally leaving the Yukon for good in the fall of 1912. In 1914 Henry wrote a short book about his life in the Yukon.

Captain Henry came to the Peace Country in 1912 with John McAuley and W. L. Caldwell, fur and general businessmen; he had known McAuley in the Yukon. Henry homesteaded west of Grande Prairie, then later moved into town.

One of the first meetings of the Village Council authorized the Reeve to swear in a policeman to “keep order and perform such other duties as the Council shall advise.” Mr. Henderson was appointed constable/first chief of police that same year. But at the first meeting of 1915, he was let go, not because he was doing a poor job, but because the Village was in such dire financial straits that they were unable to pay him. They were forced to later rehire him at the rate of \$1/day since it turned out that his services were necessary to enforce bylaws and ensure sanitary conditions within the city, but by June he was let go again, due to insufficient funds.

In 1915, after an unsuccessful attempt to join the 66th Battalion and go to war, he went into business, operating a small confectionary store on 100th Avenue, known as the “London War Office.” The store carried cigars, cigarettes, fruit, magazines, newspapers, and home-made candies.

Captain Henry lived on the top story of the Empire Hotel and his foresight in ensuring the water buckets were always full



North side of Richmond Avenue between 100 and 101 Street, showing the London War Office (striped awning) near the Selkirk Trading Co., 1915. The man under the awning has been tentatively identified as Henry Henderson. SPRA 460.028.

and that each room was equipped with a long rope is credited with saving it from fire several times. He was also well known as a poker player and many games were held on the top floor of the Empire Hotel.

Henry died in December 1924 at the Grande Prairie Hospital. He was survived by his wife, son Norman, daughter Isabel, son-in-law Guy Wright, and two grandsons. Mrs. Henderson died in Edmonton in 1957 at the age of 91. Although his daughter was married in Grande Prairie in 1920 and remained here with her husband until 1923, it is unclear whether Henry’s wife or son ever came to Grande Prairie.



Richmond Avenue, Grande Prairie, ca. 1920, showing the Empire Hotel, second from left. SPRA 1994.28.02.

Stop 9 - Dr. Louis and Edith Fredette (02-29, 30)

Louis Gilbert Fredette was born in 1878. Louis trained as a veterinary surgeon and practiced in Edmonton from 1907 to 1912, when he came to the Peace Country. Louis squatted on a quarter at Hudson’s Hope and has the distinction of being one of the first people to settle there. He later moved to Peace River Crossing and finally Grande Prairie in 1918, setting up an office in the former government telegraph building. He only remained in Grande Prairie a few months before returning to Edmonton. However, by 1922, he was back.

Edith L. Hibbs was born in 1890. She trained as a registered nurse and served in the tent hospitals of Salonika, France, Egypt, and England during WWI. It was there that she met Dr. Lewis J. O’Brien, who came to Grande Prairie after the war. Learning from him that Grande Prairie’s Katherine Prittie Hospital was in need of a matron, she decided to leave her



Dr. L. Fredette, T. W. Lawlor (stop 11) and Mrs. Lawlor picnicking on the banks of a river, June 11, 1931. SPRA 2000.30.03.

job as matron of the Summerland, B. C. hospital and move to Grande Prairie in 1923. Conditions were primitive at that time at the small, log, pioneer hospital that had no running water and power and telephone that were shut off at midnight. In 1929 a new hospital was built with a larger capacity, improved facilities, and modern equipment. Edith continued in her old position becoming the first matron of the new hospital.

Also in 1929, Edith married veterinarian Dr. Louis Fredette and gave up her position as matron. They had a daughter, Hope. Louis died in 1950 and Edith died in 1964.



The new Grande Prairie Municipal Hospital, shortly after completion in 1929. SPRA 1997.13.04.

Stop 10 - Dr. Andrew Murray and Jean Carlisle (01-42)

Dr. Andrew Murray Carlisle was born in Peterborough, Ontario in 1896. He began medical training, but it was interrupted by WWI and in 1915 he became a stretcher bearer in the Second Division Canadian Army and spent three years in France. In 1918 he returned to Canada and completed his medical training.

In 1921 Dr. Carlisle received a telegram from his brother-in-law, Jack Archer in Lake Saskatoon, urgently requesting him to come north since their doctor had left the district after the death of his wife. Dr. Carlisle arrived by train with only \$10.00 in his pocket to pay for medical supplies and with calls already waiting. His brother, David, who had a homestead on the eastern shore of Saskatoon Lake, mortgaged his farm and lent him the money to buy a new 1921 Model T Ford.

In the summer of 1921, Murray met Jean Christina McFarlane, daughter of James McFarlane of Cutbank Lake Farm. James had originally come to the Peace country in 1910 to work with his brother, Walter McFarlane, and his survey crew. Both men decided to settle in the area. After the death of her mother, Jean was raised by aunts in Claremont, Ontario, although she spent her summers during university on her father's farm. Jean and Murray were married in 1923. The Doctor's office was part of their house and Jean had to double as nursing assistant and meal provider as patients often came from a distance. They briefly left the Peace Country when Dr. Carlisle accepted an internship at the Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto, but returned to Wembley in 1926, where they lived and worked for 10 years, during which time their three children Jim, Mary Jean, and David, were born.

As Dr. Carlisle had to travel to Grande Prairie nearly every day, the family eventually moved and built a new 2-story home across from Montrose School, which the children attended. Dr. Carlisle continued practicing in Grande Prairie for the next 21 years. Jean also participated in the community in many ways, including serving on the Grande Prairie School Board for 17 years.



Mrs. Pratt and Dr. Carlisle playing chess at a Wapiti River picnic, 1942. SPRA 399.01.53.

Dr. Carlisle died in 1981 and Jean in 1986.



Jean Carlisle with her children Mary Jean, David, and Jim on the steps of their Grande Prairie home, 1936. SPRA 399.01.04.



The Carlisle Building on the north side of Richmond Avenue, ca. 1945. The doctor's office was on the top floor. SPRA 2002.29.01.

Stop 11 - Thomas Wilson Lawlor (25-67)

Thomas Wilson Lawlor was born in 1890 in Killarney, Manitoba. He attended the University of Manitoba, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1914, then studied law at the University of Alberta. Between 1916 and 1919 his studies were interrupted when he joined the 196th University Battalion to serve with the Canadian Machine Gun Corps in France and later the Royal Air Force in Egypt during WWI.

Returning to Edmonton after the War, he completed his law degree in 1920, was admitted to the bar, and set up the first law practice in Spirit River. The following year, T. W. Lawlor married Sarah McCrimmon, R.N. She had been born in Calgary in 1902 and moved to Edmonton with her parents, where she graduated from the Royal Alexandra Hospital as a nurse in 1919.

The family moved to Grande Prairie in 1924 and Lawlor set up a law practice with J. H. Sissons, later taking over the practice of D. L. McPhee. By 1930, he had been appointed agent for the Attorney General of Alberta and was made a King's Counsellor in 1944. He held the post of crown counsel for the judicial district of Grande Prairie until ill health forced his resignation in 1958.

Mr. Lawlor was very community minded, being active in the United Church, the Masons, the Board of Trade, the Hospital Board, the Canadian Club, the Canadian Legion, and the School Board.

He became Mayor of Grande Prairie in 1939 and hosted an official visit from the Governor General, Lord Tweedsmuir, in August of that year, just before the declaration of war in September. He remained in office until 1943, caught up with changes brought about by the war effort, which included a

Basic Training Army Base set up in the south end of the town and improvements to the town's airport, including an American Army Base, established as part of the Northwest Staging Route which ferried planes to Russia to contribute to the war effort. It was also during Lawlor's term of office that the town's library became a public library.

Mrs. Lawlor taught Sunday School, helped organize the first Canadian Girls in Training (CGIT) camp in the Peace Country in 1923 and pre-school and baby clinics.

The Lawlors had three daughters: Flora, Enid, and Agnes. T. W. Lawlor died in 1959 at the age of 68. Mrs. Lawlor moved to Vernon, B. C. in 1965 and died in 1978. She is not buried here.



T.W. Lawlor and Governor General Lord Tweedsmuir walking along the railway station boardwalk, 1939. SPRA 2000.30.06.



Grande Prairie Town Council, 1942-1943. Back, L to R: T. Blair, C. H. Graban, Robert Keys (Secretary-Treasurer), L. Kowensky. Front, L to R: G. H. Bishop, L.. C. Porteus, T. W. Lawlor (Mayor), J. O. Watson. SPRA 460.96.

84 AVENUE



THE CITY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE
CEMETERY SUBDIVISION
LOT 74, PAR 20, SEC 2, T14, R15, W1P, S1B, M1C



Cemetery Tour Stops

- 1 Field of Honour/Veterans (Row 21)
- 2 Cyril Mervin Clarke (21-26, unmarked)
- 3 Norman William Erskine (21-09)
- 4 Gabriel Basly (13-14)
- 5 Julienne Campbell (11-19, unmarked)
- 6 Wilfred Derocher (10-73) and
Raphael Klein (10-69, unmarked)
- 7 Dr. Lewis James O'Brien (06-07)
- 8 Henry Henderson (04-23)
- 9 Edith L. Hibbs and Dr. Louis Gilbert
Fredette (02-29, 30)
- 10 Dr. Andrew Murray Carlisle and Jean
Christine Carlisle (02-42)
- 11 Thomas Wilson Lawlor (25-67)
- 12 Rose Patterson (26-64)
- 13 Old Cemetery (at Flying Shot Lake
Cemetery Monument)
- 14 Flu Graves (at Flying Shot Lake
Cemetery Monument)
- 15 James Bowes Oliver (24-41)
- 16 R. Harry Watcher (26-47)
- 17 Gerald Carveth (70-30)
- 18 Francis Tanner (27-05)
- 19 Jerry Stojan (27-70)
- 20 J.J.E. Clarke (51-59)
- 21 Joseph Mark (51-55)
- 22 Mission Cemetery (at Mission
Monument)
- 23 1918 Murders (at Mission Monument)

Stop 12 - Rose Patterson (26-64)

Rose Devlin, born in 1893, was the eldest of five children born to Edward and Maria Devlin of Nanaimo, where her father was a miner. Rose attended Normal School in Vancouver from 1911-1912 and began her teaching career in British Columbia.

In 1919, she accompanied her friend, Laura Davis, on a trip to Beaverlodge where Laura’s sister’s family lived. She had a wonderful summer and when a teaching offer came for the fall, she took it. In the year that followed she met Donald W. Patterson, a local lawyer. Rose taught at Grande Prairie’s Montrose School until June 1921 when she returned home to help her mother, who was running a dress-making business. In December 1922, a telegram from Donald Patterson soon led to their wedding and her return to Grande Prairie.

D. W. Patterson was born in Ontario in 1888. He trained as a teacher, and later, once he reached Alberta, as a lawyer. He served in World War I and was wounded at Vimy Ridge in 1917, but continued to serve after his recovery. D. W. came to Grande Prairie in 1919 after being offered a partnership by local lawyer MacPhee. D. W. served as the town’s mayor from 1921 to 1922.

Rose became very active in the Ladies Aid and Women’s Missionary Society and was a leader of Canadian Girls in Training (CGIT). She was also a charter member of the Grande Prairie Women’s Institute (GPWI) and contributed to the Monkman Pass and Women’s Institute talk shows over CFGP, the latter of which lasted for 25 years. The Pattersons were also involved in the Canadian Club, entertaining and hosting many visitors, as

well as being great travelers themselves.

Left, Mrs. D. W. Patterson (left), last remaining charter member of GPWI, being presented with a gift by Mrs. H. N. Paul on behalf of the Branch,

The Pattersons had three children, Rhoda, Dorothy, and Donald Edward, who became a lawyer like his father and eventually the Assistant Chief Judge for Northern Alberta. He is buried here,

beside his parents.



Above, Donald Patterson and Rose Devlin on their wedding day, January 1, 1923. SPRA 152.02.01.01.



Stop 13 - Flying Shot Lake Cemetery (FSL Cemetery Monument)

This is the oldest and original part of the cemetery. It is also known as the Flying Shot Lake Cemetery, as it is considered to be in the Flying Shot Lake district. Before this cemetery existed, all burials, Catholic and Protestant, were done in the Catholic mission cemetery. Although a Presbyterian church was erected almost right away, plans for a cemetery were delayed. Rev. Forbes, the Presbyterian minister claimed that before June 1913, there was “no immediate need”. However, when a stranger died on the trail and there was no good place to bury him, the need became apparent. The Presbyterians applied to the government for a grant of land to use as a cemetery and the Department of the Interior granted their request in the spring of 1914.

Arthur Weldon Hamilton was the first person buried in the Cemetery, although his grave is now unmarked. He was born in 1886 in Ontario and had come from Calgary around 1911, purchasing property and building a large feed barn. He filed on a homestead in the area in January 1912.

Mr. Hamilton was appointed poundkeeper for the village of Grande Prairie in August 1914 with the passing of the village’s first by-law restricting horse and cattle from running free in the village. He was killed in a barn fire on the morning of November 27, 1914. The fire also destroyed Hamilton’s livery, feed, and sales stable, of which Mr. Hamilton was the proprietor and several horses. The fire is believed to have started from a lantern used by Mr. Hamilton in his morning chores. Hamilton’s funeral took place at the Anglican Church on December 1st and he was buried here, in the “Presbyterian Cemetery at Flying Shot.”

A memorial stone has since been erected to mark this old section of the cemetery. It is on an angle to line up with the orientation of the graves. There is a diagram of the Old Cemetery on the back of the monument.

The graves in the Old Cemetery have the appearance of being hand-dug. The corners are not squared and they are only about 5 feet deep. There is some speculation that the old cemetery may have been surrounded by caragana bushes.



An aerial view of the Grande Prairie Cemetery in 1974, looking east. Some of the oldest monuments are visible in this photograph. SPRA 190.02.01.0285.01.

Stop 14 - Flu Epidemic (Flying Shot Lake Cemetery, open area)

There is a large open area in the middle of the Flying Shot Lake cemetery. This is the resting place of several victims of the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918-1919. The original wooden markers have unfortunately disintegrated and rotted away.

The Spanish flu originated not in Spain but in an American army camp in Kansas. It traveled with the troops to Europe and home again, turning into a pandemic that killed an estimated 3% of the total world population. In November 1918 alone, about three-dozen local people died of the flu. The Immigration Hall was taken over by the Board of Health and used as an isolation hospital and people were required to wear a face mask; non-compliants were fined \$50. Another flu hospital was set up at Lake Saskatoon.

By mid-December the epidemic seemed to be over, but the relief was short-lived as a new wave arrived in January 1919.

The local undertaker, J. B. Oliver, stop 15 on this tour, went away to war in August 1918. Unfortunately, the man he left in charge succumbed to the flu almost immediately. Local hotel owner Frank Donald stepped into the gap. Because the ground was too hard here, a new flu cemetery was opened near Bear Creek where the ground is sandy and



Above, Grande Prairie Immigration Hall, erected about 1917, at approximately east 99th Avenue at 98th Street. SPRA 2001.01.063.



Above and right, Bear Creek Cemetery, 1982, located in the sandy dunes north of the creek. SPRA 050.08.04.103-.104.



easier to dig. This site is located on the east side of Resources Road, just outside of the City (approximately opposite the Wedgewood neighbourhood), although there are very few graves left at that location as many of the bodies were later relocated to the Flying Shot Lake Cemetery. Other flu victims were buried in the Mission cemetery and their names appear on the Mission Cemetery Monument (stop 22).

Stop 15 - James Bowes Oliver (24-41)

James Bowes Oliver was born in Ontario in 1888. He did various kinds of work in Alberta and British Columbia before journeying to the Peace River country by car in March 1914 with three friends. However, they only went as far as Peace River and the Shaftsbury Settlement, not to Grande Prairie. In spring 1915, Oliver journeyed north again, working for awhile in Watino at the Crummy store there. When the Crummy brothers' (stop 18) first store opened in Grande Prairie, Oliver moved here.

In 1915, he started a furniture store and funeral home. The story goes that his real focus was to be the furniture business, but because he had the only flat-bed vehicle in the community, he also became involved in the funeral business and the transportation of patients to the hospital.

Oliver joined the army in 1918, during the First World War, and served overseas until after the Armistice was signed in November, which caused difficulties when the flu epidemic passed through the area in 1918-1919. In fact, the village council even petitioned the military to release Oliver from the service as he was needed to help bury the dead at home. However, Oliver did not return to Grande



J. B. Oliver's Store on Richmond Avenue, west of the intersection with 100th Street, ca. 1929. SPRA 2001.01.117.

Prairie until June 1919, having spent some time in Ontario learning stone cutting. He married Ann Partlow in March 1920 and bought a farm not far from Grande Prairie. In the early 1950s, the funeral business opened its own location on 101st Avenue separate from the furniture store. Oliver's son-in-law Laurie Little joined the business in 1952, becoming a partner 10 years later. The funeral home and ambulance service shared transportation for many years until 1961 when a van was bought for ambulance use only.

Outside of his business interests, Oliver was involved in community life in other ways, serving on the Grande Prairie School Board, United Church Board of Managers, as a member and one-time president of the Grande Prairie and District Old-Timers' Association, and as the first Master of the first Masonic Lodge in Grande Prairie. Look for the Masonic symbol on his headstone. J. B. Oliver died in 1967 and is buried beside his wife and infant son. He was survived by four daughters. There is still a local funeral home called Oliver's, although it is no longer owned by the Oliver family.



Left to right, J. Percy Page, J. B. Oliver, and I. V. Macklin at an Old-Timers' Picnic, 1960. SPRA 0032.08.08.0568.

Stop 16 - R. Harry Watcher (26-47)

Harry Watcher was born on his father's farm in Bosanquet Township, County of Lambton, Ontario, in 1890. The family moved to Thedford when he was five and then to Forest, where he went to high school. He apprenticed as a watchmaker for three years in Parkhill, then came to Edmonton to work for his brother in 1910. In 1915, after working in various other Alberta locations, he came north and established his business in Grande Prairie. He was a popular civic minded man, serving that first summer on the Grande Prairie Sports celebration and helping to organize the volunteer fire department. He served on the Agricultural Society and joined the Grande Prairie Band.

In 1918, he enlisted in the armed forces, having sold his business to C.S. Hook. Returning from overseas in 1919, he joined the Great War Veterans Association in Edmonton and had thoughts of going to Manitoba but a friend assured him Grande Prairie was "booming" after the war and urged him to return, which he did. He had a new store built between Smee's Harness Shop and Spicer's Bakery. He rejoined the band, which had grown in his absence, and was a member of the fire department for 17 years. In 1926 Harry married Nora MacEwen.



Above, R. H. Watcher and friends in WWI uniforms, ca. 1915. SPRA 2001.02.512.



In 1928, Watcher bought the Spicer building, which served his business for the next 37 years. In 1929 he became one of the first shareholders of the Richmond Hill Golf Club Ltd. and in 1951, Harry became one of the charter members of the Grande Prairie Rotary Club. A long-time member of the Masonic Lodge, in 1963 he was one of the charter members of the newly formed Grande Prairie Shriners Club. In 1965, Watcher retired and sold his business to Stewart E. Curry who built his new Curry's Jewelers on the site of

Watcher's store. The Watchers had built a home on Richmond Avenue in 1954 and retired there. Harry died in 1979 at age 88, and his wife, Nora, died in 1981 at age 78.

Above left, the Grande Prairie Brass Band, ca. 1921. SPRA 2001.01.062. Left, Harry Watcher beside the display cases in his jewellery store, ca. 1940. SPRA 1969.59.521.



Stop 17 - Gerald Carveth (70-30)



Above, Carveth homestead buildings east of Grande Prairie, 1913. SPRA 2001.01.05.

Gerald Victor Carveth was born in Leskard, Ontario on September 16, 1897. He was the son of Arthur William and Elizabeth Carveth. His father and two brothers, Cecil and Rupert, arrived in the Grande Prairie area in 1911. His father returned east the following year to bring Gerald, his mother, and his sister Rita to join them. The family homesteaded on NW, NE, SE 10-72-5-W6th. In September 1915, Gerald filed on his own homestead, SW 6-73-4-W6th. He was drafted into WWI, enlisting in Calgary in June of 1918 in the 1st Depot Battalion Alberta Regiment and serving in England with the 21st Reserve. He was discharged in July 1919.

Gerald married Gladys Clarkson on February 14, 1923. She was originally from New Brunswick and had moved with her family to New Westminster, British Columbia in 1900, then to Chilliwack, and finally to Grande Prairie in 1919, where they purchased SW 4-72-4-W6th. Before her marriage to Gerald, Gladys was employed as a teacher. Gerald and Gladys Carveth bought the Arthur Carveth farm, where they lived for 31 years with their three children, Jim, Betty, and Edna.



Above, Twilight Ladies Softball team with coach Gerald Carveth, 1940. SPRA 2003.44.01.

Gerald was also involved in the life of the community. Interested in baseball, he played on senior teams in the area for 21 years, starting in 1914 with the Deep Creek Seniors. He also managed the boys' Twilight Tigers and the Ladies' Twilight Softball Team for several years. Gerald served as Chairman of the Board for Twilight School District No. 4417 from 1930 to 1933. He also participated in local UFA work, serving as both secretary and president. After retiring from farming in 1954, Gerald became secretary-treasurer of the Grande Prairie County Agricultural Society fair, Secretary-Treasurer of the Grande Prairie & District Old-Timers' Association, director (later treasurer, then city and district chairman) of the Grande Prairie and District Branch Canadian Cancer Society, and a board member of the Pioneer Museum Society of Grande Prairie and District.

Gerald Carveth died on April 13, 1982 in Grande Prairie at the age of 84. Gladys died on July 14, 1995, also in Grande Prairie.



Above, Gerald Carveth looking at one of his scrapbooks, ca. 1976. SPRA 384.03.01.

Stop 18 - Fran Tanner (27-05)

Francis (Fran) Victor Tanner was born in 1921 in Mazanod, Saskatchewan. In the late 1920s the family moved to Grande Prairie where his father prepared ice for the Grande Prairie Curling Club in the Wapi-ti Arena. This was his introduction to the world of sports. During the Depression, Fran and the local boys played hockey wherever a patch of ice could be found and cleared of snow.



Above, Fran Tanner in the South Alberta Regiment, 1943. SPRA 364.01.01.

When World War II began, Fran enlisted in the South Alberta Regiment and served in A Squadron 29th Canadian Armoured Reconnaissance Regiment in northwest Europe as a radio operator. He returned to Grande Prairie in 1945 and picked up his interest in sports again. During his first winter home, he was hired by Bill Bes-sent to help make ice and operate the arena.

For a brief time Fran played hockey in the South Peace Hockey League, but he is remembered best as the sports broadcaster on CFGP. His career there began in 1952 as a transmitter operator but soon developed into almost 20 years of announcing hockey games' play-by-play, providing game analysis, and conducting interviews. The South Peace Hockey League recognized his popularity and con-tribution to hockey by awarding him The Most Valuable Player award. Later, he became the first media person to be recognized as a Grande Prairie Hockey Legend. Fran died in Grande Prairie on March 27, 1984.

Below, the CFGP Office on the corner of 100th Street and 99th Avenue, 1949. SPRA 0005.02.01.04. Right, Fran working at CFGP as a Trans-mitter Engineer, 1952. SPRA 0364.02.02.



Stop 19 - Jerry Stojan (27-70)

Louis Stojan emigrated from Czechoslovakia in 1926. His wife Bessie and their four young sons, Louis Jr., Charlie, Jerry, and Frank arrived a year later. They first settled in Grande Prairie where Louis worked at the Ford Garage and then Thomson Motors. In 1929 they moved to a homestead in Good-fare and Louis worked in a garage in Hythe. In 1931 Louis forfeited the homestead and moved the fam-ily back to Grande Prairie and in 1937 started his own service garage, which he operated for a few years.

In the late 1930s the Stojan brothers became well known for their enthusiastic attempt to drive a car through the Monkman Pass. The people of the Peace Country dreamed of highway going to the West Coast via the Rocky Mountains and Prince George, but although they approached the government several times, nothing was ever done. Finally the Monkman Pass Association was formed in 1937 by local people who decided to build the highway themselves, raising money and donating time and effort to make their dream a reality.

In September 1938, 17-year old Jerry, 18-year old Charles, and a group of other young men, attempted to drive their 1927 Model T Ford along the proposed route, fighting such obstacles as forests, rivers, mountain inclines, and enormous boulders. Finally, winter weather caught up with them just before they reached Hansard, British Columbia, ending their nearly three month trip. They were forced to abandon the car and return to Grande Prairie by train, via Prince George. They planned to return for the car and continue the journey the following year, but with the outbreak of World War II and a continued shortage of funds, the Monkman highway project was abandoned. The car was finally rescued by boat in 1969 and brought back in piec-es. It has since been restored and is now on display at the Grande Prairie Museum.



Above, Charlie, Bessie, and Jerry Stojan be-side the Monkman Pass Highway Pathfinder Car, 1938. SPRA 1986.33.04.

In 1939 the Stojan family moved to Ontario where Louis and the three oldest boys worked in a machine shop. Dur-ing the war, Charles joined the RAF and Jerry worked in a war plant. In 1947, Charles and Jerry came back to Sexsmith and became partners in the Sexsmith Gar-age, buying out Don Innes. Louis Sr. and Bessie also moved back to the area in 1948. Louis Jr. had drowned in December 1947 when his vehicle skidded off the road and into a river.

Jerry married Irene Lenoir of Ontario in 1942 and the couple had two children. Jerry began acquiring farmland and livestock. The family became involved in raising registered quarter horses in the 1960s and won many awards. Later, Jerry became a big game guide and outfitter.

After Charles' death in an automobile accident in 1962, Jerry became sole owner of the Sexsmith Gar-age. A little later Jerry's son, also named Charles, joined the business. Stojan's Power Sports and Ma-rine is still in business today in the Grande Prairie area.

Stop 20 - J. J. E. Clarke (51-59)

John Joseph Ernest (Ernie) Clarke was born in 1886 in Ireland. He immigrated to Canada in 1907, working for the Canadian Pacific Railway in Winnipeg and Edmonton. In 1910 he married Ileen Mabel Leechman, also from Ireland, who had been born in 1883.

Ernie worked in a land office in Calgary and in 1911 was transferred to the new Grande Prairie office as senior assistant to the Land Agent. The Clarkes travelled up in July via the Long Trail. At that time, there were very few other buildings in the townsite, only Campbell Benson's stopping place and George Breedin's blacksmith shop and cabin. Even Patterson's store had yet to be built.

When land agent McLean enlisted in World War I, Ernie became acting land agent until 1917 when he left for other work. Ernie became an accountant for the Union Bank, managed the Buffalo Lakes Lumber Company, and later worked for the Liquor Control Board. Finally, he returned to the land office as Land Agent in 1930, following the transfer of responsibility for natural resources and land from the federal government to the provincial government. When the Grande Prairie Land Office was reduced to a sub-agency in 1933, he was transferred to the Peace River office.



Opening of the Dominion Land Office, Grande Prairie, 1911. SPRA 2001.01.103.

While in Grande Prairie, Ernie served as the first secretary of the Old Timers' Association, a position he held for three years from 1928-1930. He also served on the School Board. Mrs. Clarke was a member of Mrs. Forbes' Women's Missionary Society, organized in 1911. The couple had two sons while living in Grande Prairie, Harold and Gerald.

The Clarkes returned to Grande Prairie in 1942 to take charge of the land sub-agency again. In 1951, Mr. Clarke retired from his job and became secretary-manager of the Eventide Home for the Aged. He continued in that position until 1959 when he resigned due to ill health.

Ileen Clarke died 1966 and Ernie in 1969.



Ernie Clarke with son Harold and daughter-in-law Opal, ca. 1935. SPRA 2012.64.03.



Women's Missionary Society and Board of Managers of McQueen Presbyterian Church, ca. 1911. Mrs. Clarke (holding baby) is number 13. SPRA 127.02.06.

Stop 21 - Joseph Mark (51-55)

Joseph Mark was born in Canton, China in 1901 and moved to Canada in 1909, with his parents, becoming a pioneer of the Lacombe area. Joe's father served as a cook in the First World War. When the war was over, he returned to Lacombe and opened a laundry and restaurant. When Joe was old enough, his mother took him back to China to get married. He returned to Canada to work, leaving his wife and growing family in China. The 1923 federal Chinese Immigration Act (or Exclusion Act) effectively closed Chinese immigration to Canada, except in special cases, and many families were like the Mark family, with the husband living and working in Canada and periodically visiting his wife and family in China.

The Exclusion Act was repealed in 1947, but Chinese immigration was still limited to only the spouse and dependents of a Chinese man with Canadian citizenship. Joe's first wife died before the family was allowed to immigrate and Joe remarried. Joe's second wife, Jean, and two of his children emigrated from China and joined him in Grande Prairie in 1950, while the rest of his children remained in China.

In 1936, Joe moved from Lacombe to Grande Prairie. He worked at the Donald Café for a number of years before buying the Corner Coffee Shop on the corner of 100th Street and 100th Avenue in 1948. It was renamed Joe's Corner Coffee Shop and was a familiar landmark and popular gathering place. The location had previously been occupied by P. J. Tooley's real estate, farm lands, and insurance office.

The restaurant underwent an extensive renovation in 1955-56 to add the Pagoda Banquet Room, and when it reopened, it boasted a staff of 27 and could seat 230 people!

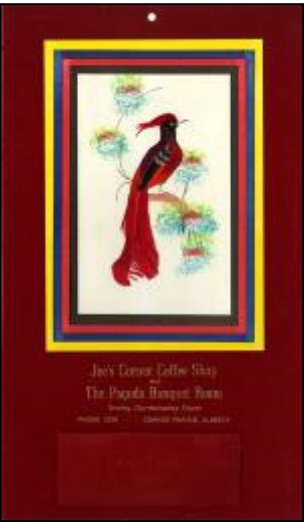
Joe was also active in community life as a member of the Rotary Club and the Chamber of Commerce.

Joe Mark retired to Edmonton and died there in September 1966. He had a total of seven children living in either China or Canada and was survived by his second wife, Jean. Joe was well-known in Grande Prairie and his death made the front page of the Herald-Tribune. Joe's Corner Coffee

Shop continued to operate only a short time after his death.



Above, Joe Mark and a woman standing by the entrance of Joe's Corner Coffee Shop, ca. 1945. SPRA 2003.24.12b.



Above, calendar advertising Joe's Corner Coffee Shop and The Pagoda Banquet Room, 1957. SPRA 116.07.02.

Stop 22 - Mission Cemetery (Mission Monument)

St. Vincent’s Roman Catholic Mission was located on the west bank of Bear Creek, west of what became the townsite of Grande Prairie. The Mission was one of the only buildings that greeted new settlers in 1911. The mission house, which served as both residence and chapel, was originally built in 1896 on the shores of Lake Saskatoon, but in 1908 it was moved to the banks of Bear Creek. A church, the first church in the Grande Prairie District, was built in 1909. The Mission Cemetery operated from about 1909 to 1922. Around 1919 or 1920, the mission burned down and it was decided to build a church and rectory within the town of Grande Prairie.

This monument was erected in 1996 and lists the names of those previously buried in the Mission Cemetery. In the early 1960s, the cemetery had to be moved due to erosion along the banks of Bear Creek, including the area occupied by the Mission Cemetery. The City approved the transfer of the graves in the Mission Cemetery in 1964 and the actual transfer was completed by the end of September 1966.

Left, a woman on horseback at Grande Prairie’s Catholic church and cemetery, ca. 1909. SPRA 0024.01.09.01. Below left, St. Vincent’s Catholic Mission on the west side of Bear Creek, approximately ½ mile south of the road to Lake Saskatoon, ca. 1907. SPRA 1998.08.04. Below, several headstones are visible at St. Vincent’s Mission Cemetery, ca. 1920. SPRA 252.01.03.



Stop 23 - 1918 Murders (Mission Monument)

There are several names on the marker for the mission cemetery with the same death date: Frank Parzychowski, Ignace Paton, John Wuwand, and Charles Zimmer. These men are 4 of 6 murder victims killed June 18 and 19, 1918. This is still the biggest unsolved mass murder in Alberta’s history. In June 1918 the First World War was still in progress, drawing many members of the North West Mounted Police overseas and leaving the Alberta Provincial Police to keep law and order at home.

The first signal of trouble occurred the night of June 19 when Joseph Snyder and his nephew Stanley were murdered. Dan Lough, a neighbour of the two men, was the first on the scene and he quickly alerted the APP constable Allen. An Inspector McDonnell was brought in from Peace River to head the



Above newspaper headline from the June 25, 1918 Grande Prairie Herald.

investigation, but it was soon concluded that the deaths were a murder-suicide. Joseph and Stanley Snyder are buried in plot 54 of the old Flying Shot Lake cemetery.

About a week later, on the farm of Ignace Paton, approximately two miles from the Snyder farm, neighbour Alex Peebles discovered three bodies. He immediately informed the police. Another body was subsequently found when they arrived at the scene. The dead men were Ignace Paton, Charles Zimmer, John Wuwand, and Frank Parzychowski. The Synder murder-suicide conclusion was dismissed and new inquiries pursued. Paton, Wuwand and Zimmer had been planning a trip to Fort Vermilion and had been known to be carrying large amounts of cash, which may have provided a motive for murder.

Accusations flew in many directions and a reward was posted, but by July the police were still making inquiries. Comments from the community on Provincial Police incompetence led to the assignment of NWMP special constable J. D. Nicholson. Still, the case dragged on. Matters weren’t helped by the fact that the Spanish flu outbreak in the fall of 1918 killed one officer and several important witnesses. Finally, on June 22, 1920, more than two years after the murders, Dan Lough was arrested and charged with all six killings. The case, which was based on circumstantial evidence, went to trial in December, but Dan Lough was acquitted. His lawyer suggested that Joseph Snyder killed all five of the other men, then committed suicide himself.

Two months later, Richard Knechtel, another local farmer and the man who had married the widow of Frank Parzychowski six months after the murders, was arrested and charged with four of the killings. His principal accuser was none other than Dan Lough. However, Knechtel’s case was dismissed at preliminary hearing in February 1921 due to lack of evidence and, once again, the 1918 murders lapsed into the realm of cold cases. The case has been worked on retrospectively by a number of amateurs in the years since 1918, with varied conclusions, but as of yet, the case remains unsolved.

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Editor's Note, February 2021: Previous versions of this document contained inaccurate information regarding Richard Knechtel and his connection to the 1918 murders. The following corrections have been made on this document: Richard Knechtel married Rose Parzychowski six months after the murder, not two months; Richard Knechtel was charged with four of the six murders, not all six; The charges against Richard were dismissed at preliminary hearing in February 1921 due to lack of evidence.