



BRUCE BUMSTEAD/BRANDON SUN

From a fur-trading outpost to a bustling regional service centre, Brandon has undergone a momentous 125 years — and the area’s history goes back even further. What might one of the original Hudson’s Bay Company voyageurs think of our shopping centres, our car-filled streets and our multi-storey downtown buildings, all of which would have been unthinkable over a century ago? We will never know the thoughts that might pass through such a time-traveller’s head. But we can imagine what it would look like, thanks to Greg Steele and his historical re-enactment clothing.

## NEWSPAPER FOUNDER RECALLS TENT CITY

*Embryonic Brandon Had Barely Begun When ‘The Sun’ Commenced Publication*

**From:** “Early Days of Brandon as told by founder of the Sun, W. J. White; Some Very Breezy Reminiscences,” printed in the Brandon Sun on June 18, 1927.

### UPON REACHING BRANDON

Up bright and early the following morning, I made my way down to the ferry. There are a number living today who will remember of that, the only means of crossing the river. I soon reached Brandon. What! No buildings, nothing but tents. It looked for all the world like an army camp. At least that was all that my vision took in at first glance.

They formed the strong scene in the picture. But there were buildings — a few.

There was Jim Smart’s hardware store, corner of Sixth and Rosser; Fisher and Fraser’s grist mill; the hotel at the corner of Sixth and Rosser, Zeke Evan’s

house, Bower and Blackburn’s store and a few others, and I think Fleming’s drug store, and probably a few others along Rosser Avenue and Sixth Street. But the noise of the hammer could be heard in every direction, away far into the night, and at daylight the reverberating echoes could still be heard. It seemed as if no one slept. Sidewalks were being laid. These were two planks placed side by side, lengthwise, along Rosser and it required no little skill in the art of navigation to adjust oneself sufficiently to keep from being precipitated into the mire and mud on either side. Rosser was being made a street — a real street, the expense being borne by contributions from the promoters of the embryo city and

by real estate operators. These were in strong evidence, judging from the number of real estate signs that adorned the highway, and it must have kept an army of painters busily engaged in painting the signs.

### THEN AND TODAY

Those who look upon the avenue today with its paved roadway, its granolithic walks, little realize the jeopardy in which those who traversed it in that day placed themselves, whether it was by foot or vehicle. I saw horses become so mired that it took windlasses placed on beams of timber to release them, little but their backs and heads being visible. It would not be surprising if on exploration there would be found several wagons submerged lying under the asphalt of today.

... SEE ‘MONIKER’ ON PAGE FOUR

## NEVER A TOWN, OUR CITY MARKS ITS 125TH YEAR

### Plenty of Pride In The Past, As City Looks To A Bright Future

The city of Brandon sprung up a century and a quarter ago out of literally nothing. One day, a collection of homesteaders were sparsely scattered along the meandering Assiniboine river. On the next, railway representatives declared that the sleepy area would be home to a major divisional point — and Brandon was born.

BY MATT GOERZEN

Shut off the boob tube, throw on some dancin’ shoes and party this weekend like it’s 1882. No, really.

Described as an “old fashioned celebration with a new twist”, Brandon’s Homecoming Weekend will pay tribute to 125 years of history, friendship, and family ties.

“The city will be packed,” 125 Birthday Celebrations Committee member Cathy Snelgrove told the Sun. “When events like this happen, people are excited to get out and get involved.”

“I’m sure we’re going to have former residents come from all over,” added committee chair Jeff Harwood. “From a 125th perspective, I think certainly I’d like them to go away with a sampling some of the events we’ve got going on.”

Brandon officially turned 125 on May 30, and the city marked the occasion with a birthday party at the Riverbank Discovery Centre.

But now it’s time for the main event. For the past two years, the committee has worked to make the Homecoming Weekend one

to remember, with a grand lineup that harkens back to simpler times.

The celebration begins tonight with an Old Time Dance at the Victoria Inn Imperial Ballroom, with a gig by Scotty McIntosh’s Big Band. The dancing runs from 7:30 p.m. to midnight. But if dancing’s not your bag, and a little open air would fit the bill, grab a lawn chair and enjoy the family movie The Firehouse Dog, starting at dusk in Rideau Park.

“We’re hoping Brandon firefighters will be out that night to coincide with the movie,” Snelgrove said. “We tried to make it a family focus.”

If you’re into communing with the dead, Gossip in the Graveyard will be back by popular demand tonight and tomorrow evening. Brockie Donovan Funeral Home will host the event, which was first showcased as part of the National Communities in Bloom Conference held in Brandon last year.

During this two-hour interactive walking tour, actors portray historic figures in Brandon’s history in period costume, as visitors walk past the gravesites.

Saturday’s festivities are

punctuated by a series of tours around the city, including the Westman Retired Educators 125th Museum, the Commonwealth Air Training Museum and Vintage Car Display, an open house at the Brandon Masonic Temple, as well as tours of the Daly House, the Royal Canadian Artillery Museum at CFB Shilo, and the Brandon Armoury, home of the 26th Field Artillery Regiment.

Other events include a farmers market at the Town Centre Parking Lot, an old-fashioned family picnic and open stage at Rideau Park, and a homecoming social at the Keystone Centre’s Manitoba Room, featuring Big Dyck Cadillac.

On Canada Day, end the weekend off right with an inter-denominational church service at Brandon City Hall, hosted by reverend Harvey Hurren, starting at 9 a.m.

After church, take a tour of some of Brandon’s oldest Christian sanctuaries with the Heritage Downtown Church Tour, or catch a wave with the Waves of Hope Dragon Boat Demonstration at the Riverbank Discovery Centre

And what Canada Day would be complete without a dazzling display of patriotic fireworks? Catch them from the riverbank when the sun goes down.

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For a more detailed listing of events and schedules, please turn to Page Three.

## FIND IT INSIDE

### The seedy side:

It’s not all nice in Brandon’s past. Take a peek at the history of crime and criminals from the “bad old days,” starting on Page Twenty-four.

### Our origins:

A brief mention of Fort Brandon, which preceded the city by almost a whole ‘nother century, was all it took.

Could two intrepid Brandon Sun reporters track down the remains of this early fore-runner?

Well, they tried. Read all about it, starting on Page Thirteen.

### Sharing the glory:

When the railway came to Brandon, it came from somewhere and it went places, too. Those places are our neighbouring towns, and many of them are celebrating 125 years this summer as well.

Join their celebrations, starting on Page Nineteen.

### Forget the past:

How will the city grow? We asked city planners to tell us what they see. Turn to Pages Six and Seven to read what they told us.

Plus — kids and psychics also predict the city’s future. Look ahead with them at the years to come on Pages Thirty-three and Thirty-four.

### Go girls:


It’s not just history, it’s “her story,” too. They say it takes two to tango — read up on some of the ladies who have made a big difference in Brandon’s past on Page Twenty-nine.

### The boys in khaki:

It wasn’t long after the founding of Brandon that a military camp sprung up nearby. First it was Camp Sewell, then Camp Hughes. Now we call it CFB Shilo.

Read about our military connection, beginning on Page Eight.


36 Pages Total To Peruse



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# HAPPY BIRTHDAY BRANDON!

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# Wind in Your Hair?



## Brandon's First Automobile Had Neither Windshield Nor Roof

This was one of the first automobiles in Brandon. An Olds, it was purchased in 1905 by T.S. Matheson — at about the same time as E.L. Christie purchased a Ford.

Christie “intends to do some speeding on local streets,” reported the Sun. Matheson, meanwhile, was lauded for having an automobile that “runs very smoothly under the expert management of its owner.”

However, just five weeks after

this printed compliment, by late summer, city council had prepared a bylaw for the regulating and controlling of motor vehicles.

Matheson later sold his car to Wm. Muir, who is the one seen sitting in the car in this picture. The child is Kelvin C. Baxter of Winnipeg, grandson of Robert M. Coombs of Brandon.

The car had a reported top speed of 12 miles per hour.

If you wanted to get a driver's licence in 1911, the test was a wee bit different than it was today — there was no parallel parking requirement, for example.

See Page Twenty-six for more.

# RURAL NEIGHBOURS WERE ESSENTIAL TO CITY'S SUCCESS

BY MATT GOERZEN

Brandon's relationship with western Manitoba's farming communities may one day spare it the ravages of rural depopulation, says an expert in rural development.

“As long as we still need to eat, there will be farms,” Brandon University associate professor Doug Ramsey told the Sun.

“If there are farms, we need services. And if there's agriculture, there will be a Brandon. I can't imagine the Prairies without it.

“Even if there wasn't, I think Brandon might be large enough to survive on its own. But it might not grow.”

Brandon started as a divisional point along the Canadian Pacific Railway, and fed growing communities such as Rapid City, Minnedosa and Virden with new settlers who came to find homesteads or make their fortunes on the new investment frontier.

The settlement of the West and the creation of small farming communities in Westman fed back to Brandon's business community, which sold supplies to incoming pioneers.

Brandon University archivist and researcher Tom Mitchell says by 1900, the city had grown

to 5,000 citizens, mainly because of the railway, and the settlers who used it.

“Hardware merchants didn't make a living off Brandon,” Mitchell said. “They were serving a hinterland. They started businesses to serve this hinterland.”

Mitchell said Brandon's growth also hinged on it being a major divisional point on the CPR.

“CPR put a lot of its operational stuff on a scale you won't find in other places. At certain places you have to have points where there's more machinery. When you do that, instantly you need a significant labour force, and retail follows.”

A Brandon Sun story which appeared in the 1927 Special Old-Timers Section spoke of the city's rise as the nationally-known “Wheat City,” a name that has stuck ever since.

“Brandon's unsurpassed transportation facilities have played by no means an unimportant part in her marvelous growth from a small collection of frame houses thirty years ago to one of the chief distributing centres in the Western Provinces, the proud position that Brandon City occupies at the present time,” it read.

The communities that fed the initial growth of Brandon's business district and commercial farming ventures still do to some extent, but much has changed since those early years. Family farms have grown into corporate farms and more and more rural citizens continue to leave small communities and townsites for larger urban centres.

Statistics Canada's 2006 agriculture census showed a 9.6 per cent decrease in the number of farms in Manitoba during the past five years. The same census noted that southwestern Manitoba's growth was dominated by Brandon, which

increased by 1,795 people since 2001.

On the other hand, the majority of the remaining communities and municipalities in the western part of the province showed weak growth or even decline. Ramsey says those trends are likely to continue into the next few decades.

“In the next 20 years, there will be greater levels of depopulation, and I think some communities will disappear,” Ramsey said. “We don't even know if we will be driving from one community to the next, with higher energy costs.”

There is a point however where rural depopulation will likely halt, as larger scale communities like Virden and Neepawa continue to retain their population.

“You're not going to have Brandon and land. The medium-sized communities are relatively equally distributed around the province.”

Brandon's business community, while still largely connected to the agriculture that helped spawn it, has become more independent of its rural neighbours. But the unique relationship Brandon enjoys with the rest of Westman will likely help the city retain its rural character for the foreseeable future.

“From Brandon to Westman, there is a more symbiotic relationship than Winnipeg to the rest of Manitoba,” Ramsey said. “Many times I've heard people say Brandon is a rural city. And many people characterize Brandon as an agricultural service centre.”

“There may be a Perimeter Highway mentality develop eventually. So far though, people don't seem to despise Brandon. They have negative thoughts about Winnipeg.”

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For more on our rural neighbours — after all, they are celebrating some birthdays as well — see Page Nineteen.



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# Celebrating Brandon 125!



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# Homecoming Celebration Offers Activities for Everyone

**FRIDAY, JUNE 29**

**Old Time Dance — Victoria Inn Imperial Ballroom:** If your idea of fun is putting on your dancing shoes and taking a few turns around the dance floor, then do we have the thing for you!!! From 7:30 p.m. until midnight, the Victoria Inn will be sponsoring an old time dance with Scotty MacIntosh Band that is sure to get your feet moving. A light lunch will be served and tickets will be \$5/person. Tickets will be available at the Victoria Inn front desk or by calling Cora Lee at 729-2257.

**Brockie Donovan Gossip in the Graveyard — Brandon Municipal Cemetery:** Back by popular demand, Brockie Donovan Funeral Home will be sponsoring Gossip in the Graveyard. This event was first showcased as part of the National Communities in Bloom Conference held in Brandon in 2006 and proved to be a hit with both our local residents and visitors from across Canada. This two-hour interactive walking tour runs both on Friday and Saturday evenings and provides an opportunity for visitors to take a step back in time and to meet the colourful and inspiring individuals who have helped in shaping the Brandon we know today. To register for this event, contact Cora Lee at 729-2257 prior to June 29 (participation is limited, tickets \$15 + GST).

**Free Open Air Family Movie — Rideau Park:** If you are looking for that special something to entertain the entire family, then why not grab your lawn chair and come down and enjoy the family movie, “Fire House Dog” in the open air. The movie will start at 8 pm and will be free, so get there early and stake out your piece of green space.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 30**

**Farmer’s Market — Town Centre Parking Lot:** There is nothing better than the smell of fresh bread or the taste of fresh vegetables from the garden. The Brandon Farmers Market Coop will be sponsoring the market, so come down and get your fill of fresh vegetables, fruit (strawberries!!!), baking, canning, honey, breads and crafts.

**Westman Retired Educators 125th Museum:** While your down at the Town Centre take the opportunity to visit the museum (10 a.m. - 5 p.m.) that has been set up specifically to celebrate our 125th birthday. The museum has numerous pictures and displays that will allow you think back to your childhood and celebrate our education system in Brandon.

**Air Commonwealth Training Museum/Vintage Car Display:** Don't miss the chance to visit the museum and see first hand the transformation that is taking place. This group has continued to rebuild a piece of our history and it is there for all of to enjoy. They are planning a special treat for this weekend by partnering with a local vintage car group, so take the short drive and celebrate our history!

**Manitoba Genealogical Society:** The South West Branch (SWB) of the Manitoba Genealogical Society members welcome everyone to the Brandon's 125th Celebrations and Homecoming. The SWB will have a display booth at the Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum Canteen Building on Saturday, June 30, from 10 am - 4 pm. Please stop by and visit us to learn more about your Brandon Roots. The resources that will be available for researching are: the 1901 census index for Brandon, the 1900-1929 index of obituaries from the Brandon Sun and books relating to Brandon's history. SWB members will be available to help you get started on your family tree and will to try to answer your genealogical questions. We look forward to meeting you and exchanging family history stories. For more information, contact: Sheila 725-3095

**Old Fashion Family Picnic and Open Stage, Rideau Park:** What celebration would be complete without a picnic? Come down, bring a blanket or a lawn chair, a little lunch and enjoy the music of a number of our local groups. From 11am until 4pm, take the opportunity to catch up with old friends, play some games, and enjoy one of the best green spaces in Brandon.

**Open House and Tea — Odd Fellows Corner, 939 Ninth St.:** The Oddfellows are celebrating their 125th anniversary as well and will be hosting a open house and tea from 2 - 4 p.m. on June 30th. They would love to have past members, current members and the general public come out to celebrate this



significant milestone with them.

**Open House — Brandon Masonic Temple, Eighth Street and Lorne Avenue:** There will be an open house between 2 - 4 p.m. on June 30. They encourage the public to come out and share in the celebrations with them.

**Golf Tournament:** There will be an open golf tournament held at the Wheat City Golf Course. If you would like to sign up your foursome or enter individually, please contact the Wheat City Club House at 729-2177.

**Heritage Tours:** Take the chance to walk through “the old neighborhood” and celebrate Brandon's history and heritage. There will be four free tours held on June 30 starting at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. To register, contact Cora Lee at 729-2257.

**Museum Tours:** The museum will be open throughout the entire weekend and are currently in the process of putting together many of their own plans for this weekend. Daly House Museum Open Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. RCA Museum (Shilo) - Vintage Military Vehicle Display Open Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. 26th Field

## Celebrate Canada Day at the Riverbank

**Celebrations at the Riverbank Discovery Centre and around Brandon on Sunday, July 1.**

**MAIN STAGE ENTERTAINMENT**

**1 p.m.:** Official Opening

**1:15 p.m.:** Air Demonstration - Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum

**1:30 -2:15 p.m.:** Katlin Mathison / Jessica Lorin

**2:30-3:30 p.m.:** Brian Clyne-Hoop Dancer

**3:45-4:30 p.m.:** Two for a Song

**4:45-5:15:** Magic of Anders

**5:30-6:15:** Ron Thompson / Doug Orr

**6:30-7:15:** Kaitlyn Mitchell

**8:30-10:30:** NuPhunk Orchestra

**10:30 (Dusk):** Fireworks (best view - Dinsdale Park and Riverbank Discovery Centre)

**ATTRACTIONS**

**1:30-4:30 p.m.:** Hay Rides

**2 p.m.:** Waves of Hope Dragon Boat Demonstration

**4 p.m.:** Brandon Riverbank Duck Race

**Throughout the Day**

Leaky Boat Race; Frozen T-Shirt Contest; Stream N’ Wood Bike Rodeo; Early Canada Display; Westman Reptile Gardens Display; Children’s Activities; Origami - Jack Boreski; Canadian Forces Display; Self Guided Trail Tours; Stream N’

Wood Rental Kiosk (Paddle Boat/Canoe/Bike/Kayak & Roller Blade Rentals); River Tours aboard “The Discoverer;” Riverbank Fundraiser BBQ & Food Vendors. *\*Schedule & attractions are subject to change*

**AROUND BRANDON**

**9 a.m.:** Interdenominational Church Service at City Hall

**Noon - 8 p.m.:** Kiwanis YMCA Keystone Pool (13th & Southern) and Kinsmen Pool (405 Park St.) Pools open weather permitting.

**1 p.m. - 6 p.m.:** Public Swim at the City of Brandon Canada Games Sportsplex

Regiment 12th Manitoba Dragoon Museum (Brandon Armoury) Open Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Brockie Donovan Gossip in the Graveyard - Brandon Municipal Cemetery:** Back by popular demand, Brockie Donovan Funeral Home will be sponsoring Gossip in the Graveyard. This two-hour interactive walking tour runs both on Friday and Saturday evenings. To register for this event, contact Cora Lee at 729-2257 prior to June 29 (participation is limited, tickets \$15 + GST).

**Homecoming Social - Manitoba Room of the Keystone Centre:** The Keystone Centre is sponsoring one of the biggest socials of the 125th birthday year!! This will be the party of all parties, so don't miss the sounds of Big Dyck Cadillac and partake in our own birthday beer, Assiniboine 1882. Tickets will be \$10 per person available through Ticket Master.

**SUNDAY, JULY 1**

**Interdenominational Church Service, City Hall:** Reverend Harvey Hurren will be hosting a church service in the foyer of City Hall at 9 a.m. (doors open at 8:30 a.m.).

**Canada Day Celebrations - Riverbank Discovery Centre:** Enjoy a full day of activities for the family - free of charge! The day will begin at 1 p.m. with the opening ceremonies. The stage will then host continuous entertainment throughout the day, featuring singers, dancers and cultural displays. There will be a variety of other on-site displays including the Westman Reptile Gardens. The day concludes with a dazzling display of fireworks to celebrate Canada's birthday.

**Heritage Downtown Church Tour - Central United Church:** Central United Church has organized with 8 other area churches, from First Christian Reformed at 15th and Victoria to St Andrews Presbyterian at Russell and Louise Avenue, to have a tour of the downtown churches who were instrumental in the history of Brandon. This will take place on Sunday, July 1 from 1:30 to 4 p.m. Cake and lemonade will be available at Central United Church.

**Waves of Hope Dragon Boat Demonstration:** Come on down to Riverbank Discovery Centre and watch the Waves of Hope Dragon Boat Team demonstrate their skills.

**INFORMATION BOOTH**

On Friday, June 29 from 2 p.m. until 8 p.m. and again on Saturday, June 30 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. there will be an information booth in the foyer of City Hall. Information about the events and 125th merchandise will be available.

For more information on the many-registered Brandon 125 events please visit: [www.brandon.ca/125](http://www.brandon.ca/125).

LIVE

# Music Rules at

THE 40

Two time Canadian Country Music Award winner in the independent male artist of the year category, Aaron Pritchett, is currently on tour in the Prairies. When his agent, Jim Cressman was scouting out venues in which the lauded singer could perform in this area, his sights were set on the newly refurbished, newly renamed bar simply known now as The 40.

"Brandon's a really great country market and Aaron has a huge fan base in there. We have never had a change to get him in there to play. So the opportunity came up and The 40 made a serious offer and we were able to put it together and marry up synergies and make it happen," says Cressman, of CS Agency in Calgary, who also represents Charlie Major, Emerson Drive, Johnny Reid and others.

"So far so good. Everything's been great with them. We're excited about possibly bringing some other big acts through there in the next year."

This is not the first hot, current recording artist that The 40 has presented. The bar, located in the Trails West Inn, has a name that has become synonymous with live music in the region. It has seen the launch of music careers and it has become a stop of choice for touring bands and artists.

To celebrate the first 25 years of the venue formerly know as The North 40 Saloon, the venue's organizer, one of the owner and the general manager, Heidi Howarth, who has been on board for 23 years, has overseen many changes as she continues to line up rock and country bands that either are at the top of the charts or have maintained a following throughout lengthy careers.

April Wine, Big Sugar, Blackhawk, Blue Rodeo, Glass Tiger, Great White, Helix, Honeymoon Suite, Jet Set Satellite, Kim Mitchell, Lisa Brokop, Little Texas, Michelle Wright, Nazareth, Northern Pikes, Patty Loveless, Platinum Blonde, Powder Blues, Prism, Theory of a Deadman, Thornley, Trooper and Wide Mouth Masson are just some of the acts that have graced The 40's stage during its first quarter century.

A new state-of-the-art sound system and components on the stage have been added to further enhance the live music experience in the venue, whose management constantly strive to deliver for music fans in Brandon and area.

"The entertainment is excellent. They get in some super bands," says Vic Webb, a regular at The 40 who returns for the live music and for the dancing. "Because of the bands (Heidi) has brought in a lot of people."

What has repeatedly astounded Howarth is the dedication that most musicians bring to their show.

"When the bands are up there, they get into such a groove with the audience," she says. "The story with Long John Baldry is that he just went on and on, and we had to send him a note at quarter after two that the bar was closing."

However, Howarth has also ensured that The 40 is a place that encourages and fosters budding and growing talent. It has proved to be a popular venue for local bands. From funk to heavy metal to country, countless young or part-time musicians have had this stage upon which to perform. Some of the acts featured at the bar have included 18 Rabbit, FUGR, Armed and Hammered, NuPhunk, Orchestra, Curtis Grambo, the Mike Sacharko Band and countless others.

"Bands are telling us that they love the new stage. They love the look of the room, the feel of the room. Those were our objectives," says Howarth.

After the success of hosting the Bud Country Talent Search in the late 1970s and early '80s, she devised the Orange Crush Talent Search for Kids, a contest that has been attracting dozens of aspiring singers since 1990. Some of the winners have gone on to forge careers in music, like Chris Thorsteinson of Doc Walker, Amanda Stott and Louise and Natalie Ponchon of the Daisy Dukes Bands.

"I was involved with Bud Country for so many years and kept thinking: 'What about kids?' There wasn't an opportunity out there for them. When I went to school or when my kids did, there were festivals or arts kinds of competitions. So, we came up with this and the first year, 30 people signed up," says Howarth, who adds that last year, there were 48 young singers involved.

"There's such great talent out there. I still maintain that it should be done for fun and it's unfortunate that you have to pick a winner, but you still want to be able to showcase that talent and that's what it's all about."

Indoor rodeo, impersonators, hypnotists and other types of fun entertainment have also been part of The 40. For almost a decade, line-dancing classes were popular at The 40 and these spawned The North 40 Dancers. This non-profit group performed at fairs and various events, like world curling and world youth baseball competitions, in the region. On one occasion, the dancers led hundreds of school children in outdoor line-dancing.

Plans for the venue is to continue to present local bands as well as others of national and cross-border acts as well as keep audiences entertained with contests and other events.

In the last few months; there have other changes at the venue, like some cosmetic and other upgrades that will be also appreciated. New carpets, new chairs, some minor structural changes and a fresh coat of paint have been made to the room, taking away the last of the smoke smell and giving it more of a lounge feel.

"It's fixed right up real nice and cleaned up very well," says Webb, who also appreciates the outdoor deck that separates smokers from other patrons. "It's come a long way."

Reprinted from the  
Brandon Sun

LIVE IN CONCERT

July 26 — Jeff Healey  
September 12 — Aaron Pritchett

www.the40.ca



# A PIONEER’S LIFE RECALLED

**From: “Pioneer Life In West Described by Ritchie MacPerson; Celebrating Eighty-eighth Birthday Tomorrow, and Still Very Active,” printed in the Brandon Sun on June 30, 1947.**

Mile-long wagon trains laden with furs inching down the Touchwood trail, the flavor of bread baked in a home-made clay oven, oxen-powered threshing machines and the feel of a breaking plow biting into virgin prairie, these are the memories which enrich the life of Ritchie Macpherson, pioneer Brandon citizen who celebrates his 88th birthday tomorrow.

Born in Wemyss Bay, Renfrewshire, Scotland, Mr. Macpherson arrived in Brandon with his brother Robert on May 1, 1882. With great new lands opening up the two young Scots

were determined to have a share in it and they laid their plans carefully. Robert would go on ahead and stake out two homesteads in Saskatchewan and Ritchie, who was a cabinetmaker would remain and work at his trade to earn the stake which they would need to develop their holdings.

By coincidence the first nail that Ritchie drove, working as a carpenter, was in the building which has served as the Macpherson and Bedford funeral home since 1926. It was built originally on the corner of Eleventh street and Rosser

avenue for the Merchant’s Bank of Canada and later moved to its present site where the brick veneer was added.

**PIONEERING IN WEST**

The following year, 1883, he went to join his brother forty miles north of Qu’Appelle. They built a sod house for shelter and dug a 52 foot well. In the digging they found rich yellow clay and with this and a large flat rock and willow wands they fashioned an oven. It was primitive, but the bread they baked was a welcome relief from bannock.

Mr. Macpherson marvels now at their audacity and optimism. They were forty miles from the nearest market, a four day return trip, and they cut their grain with a cradle, bound the sheaves by hand and threshed it

with flails fashioned from two willow sticks. Almost all their early crops were either burned out by drought or frozen.

**MOVED BACK TO BRANDON**

After a succession of dry years the brothers became convinced that wheat could not be grown west of Brandon and they sold out for what they could get and Ritchie returned to Brandon.

Again his trade stood him in good stead and he found a job with the Wilson and Smyth furniture company then operating on the present site of Knowlton’s store. He remained with the firm for twelve years and then formed a partnership with George Vincent and bought it out.

H. B. Bedford subsequently

replaced Mr. Vincent as the junior partner in the furniture store and the business was expanded to include a funeral service. In 1926 the furniture department was sold and the firm moved to its present location.

Having committed himself to a life in business, Mr. Macpherson nevertheless retained his interest in the soil and has expressed it through the years by actively promoting horticulture in the city. He was president of the Brandon horticultural society for a number of years and was made a life member of the Manitoba association in 1943. Two years ago he succeeded the late B. J. Hales as chairman of the parks board.

He has also been interested in the development of cultural activity in the community serv-



Ritchie MacPherson

ing as treasurer of the music festival committee during the years that the festival was held here and presently acting as one of the judges for the school art exhibits at the provincial exhibition.

Only recently retired from an active business life, he is still keenly interested in the community which he has helped to build.

## Origin of ‘Wheat City’ Moniker Revealed

### EDITORIAL RECOLLECTIONS WERE PUBLISHED IN 45TH ANNIVERSARY SECTION

... FROM ‘NEWSPAPER FOUNDER’ ON PAGE ONE

The railway reached Brandon in early fall. With it came additional thousands of the hardy sons of the east, sometimes accompanied by their wives and families. Brandon became the distributing point for the west, north and south. Trekking in all directions to the homestead or the land purchased at \$2 an acre from the Canadian Pacific, it was a sight we shall never see again, and gave full justice to the inspiration that nothing could stand in the way of Brandon becoming the metropolis of the west. Business boomed, merchants thrived.

But the time came when the railway extended its operations, and there was a greater west to attract. It was then that Brandon became its normal self, and saw that its support was to be within a territory more local.

Grand Valley, which had been boomed by the Grahams and the McVickers had a silent requiem and it was consigned to the tombs of the past. Many of those who had placed some of their savings there and lost most of them, transferred what they had left and their energies to Brandon, and helped to send the already ascending prices of real estate a-booming.

#### BRANDON “THE WHEAT CITY”

In the years ‘82, ‘83 and ‘84 [Editor’s note: that would be 1882, 1883 and 1884] Brandon had the credit of being the largest initial grain market in the world, and I doubt if the record of receipts on the Brandon market at that time have ever been equalled, and probably never will.

During the grain marketing seasons there could be seen teams laden with grain along Rosser and Sixth that stretched almost the full length of these streets.

It was this that gave to the city the title “Wheat City”. There was no railway either to the south or north. The wheat territory of which Brandon was the center, extended sixty miles to the south, clear to the international boundary. Wheat was delivered at the Brandon elevators that had been drawn over 100 miles, a three or four days’ travel by team and man. And the price. A dollar a bushel was considered a good price, but much of it was sold at considerably less than that figure.

It could not be that farming paid under this great handicap, and it was only natural that there should be demands for more railways. The railways came, and then followed the falling of grain deliveries. Towns sprung up along the new railway lines, and the business that formerly found its way into Brandon was absorbed by the new growing towns. This was to be expected.

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1945 – 1962 Fowler & Sons Ltd. Chev Olds - Virden

1966 – 1975 Brandon Chrysler Dodge - Brandon

1975 – 1981 Fowler Chev Olds - Virden

1982 – 1986 Fowler Pontiac Buick GMC - Brandon

1986 – 2006 Fowler Pontiac Buick GMC - Brandon

2006 – Present Fowler Pontiac Buick GMC - Brandon

# 85 Years of Service

When you’ve been operating a business for four generations and your name is trusted and respected by both customers and employees, that is success.

And it’s that success that has seen the Fowler family and auto business grow from the humble beginnings of Harry Fowler in 1922 – who sold cars from his H.O. Fowler Groceries, Dru Goods, Boots and Shoes and Gent Furnishings (his letter head complete with the Chevrolet logo) in Maryfield, Sask. – to the recently renovated and expanded Fowler Pontiac Buick GMC in 2006.

“Grandpa’s business obviously led to a GM franchise,” said Fowler general manager Brian Fowler. “He had cars in his blood.”

Business wasn’t easy in those days. Harry sold 50 Chevrolet vehicles in 1922, ended up bankrupt in the Depression, but bounced back into the auto business like a well-inflated tire. He proved you can’t keep a good man down.

“Grandpa picked up a Chev and drove it home to sell in Maryfield and he would carry the buyers credit,” said Brian. “When the ‘30s hit and he couldn’t collect the money, he went bankrupt.

“He then started a general store in Hargreave, Manitoba, and started the dealership in Virden in 1944. If the ‘30s hadn’t come along, he probably would have had a dealership sooner.”

Harry’s sons Glen, Orville and Colin, also had cars in their blood and joined their father at Fowler & Sons in Virden in 1944. After Harry’s death, Glen continued to run the dealership for 18 years until the sale of that dealership in 1962.

After to moving to Brandon in 1966, Glen opened Brandon Chrysler-Dodge, and sold it in 1975. At this time, Glen retired due to health issues. That same year, his son Brian, who was only 22, bought a dealership in Virden.

But it turned out that nothing was going to keep another good man down – an obviously inherited trait.

“Dad’s health turned out not to be as serious as he thought,” said Brian. Coming back into the auto business in 1982, Glen agreed to run Brandon Automobiles – located on Fifth Street and Rosser Avenue – which was owned by the Murray family at that time, for one year under the condition that if the dealership came up for sale, he would get the first option to buy.

And that is exactly what Glen did – changing the name of the dealership to Fowler Pontiac Buick GMC. With their father at the helm once again, Brian sold his Virden dealership and Grant returned from B.C., where he had been involved with a dealership, to join the Fowlers forces.

In 1986, Fowler’s moved to a brand new, much larger dealership, which at that time was on the edge of the city, at 3900 Victoria Avenue.

The 20,000-square foot building was on four acres of land and it gave the dealership what it didn’t have downtown – space.

“Ideally we would have built on 18th Street at that time,” said Brian. “But the price of real estate was atrocious and the availability was limited. Brandon Chrysler-Dodge was on Victoria Avenue and dad (Glen) liked this part of town and this land was available. And it was a good decision.”

The following year in 1987, Glen retired and Brian became the dealer principal of Fowler Pontiac Buick GMC and majority stockholder.

Brian’s son, Rob who has been with the dealership for 11 years, is also a shareholder and is the general sales manager.

Last year, the dealership has underwent an extensive three-quarters-of-a-million dollar interior and exterior renovation.

“We expanded the building by adding on another 1,000 square feet,” said Rob. “The steel cladding on the outside was replaced and redone with a stucco finish.

“And there isn’t anything in the interior not touched. Our showroom was completely torn apart and put back together with a new layout, glass windows in the offices, new doors and new tile. The results are fantastic.”

The renovations were another one of Glen’s philosophies.

“It was time to move forward again. Grandpa’s philosophy was always you should be re-doing the interior every 10 years and the exterior every 20 and it fit that timeline,” explained Rob.

“Our commitment is to continue to be here for the long-term and it’s important to say that with sincerity. We will be here to follow up on any commitments we have made to our customers.”

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# Once Brandon’s Summer Getaway, Lake Clementi Is Not Quite Forgotten

BY GRANT HAMILTON

Drive south out of Brandon on Highway 10, and you’re soon surrounded by outlying traces of the city’s presence. First you’ll pass the Brandon Gun Club’s Winchester Shooting Complex, then the old Lucky Star Drive-In. Then, miles of giant highway billboards advertising hotels and restaurants in the city you just left.

But then, just as you think you’ve gone too far, just at the edge of Brandon’s sphere of influence, just over the hump of the Brandon Hills, just as you start to approach Souris instead of leaving Brandon, there’s a small green sign: Lake Clementi Road.

Once a popular summer lakeside resort for Brandon, Lake Clementi has long-since been eclipsed by places like Clear Lake, Oak Lake and Sandy Lake.

These days, a gravel road curls around the south end of the lake, where cottage-y homes overlook the small lake.

How small? Well, it’d be large enough to go boating, but it’s small enough to swim across.

These days, though, there’s not much left of the beach that once graced one side of the lake. Instead, the shore is choked by reeds.

“We’ve taken our kids and gone swimming the odd time, but it’s not all that pleasant an experience,” said Cathy Perry, who, along with her husband Joe, has raised eight children in a turn-of-the-century home overlooking Lake Clementi.

“It’s not very deep (and) it’s very weedy,” agreed her son, Nelson. “There’s lots of stones walking out.”

“It must have been cleaner” when it was a popular resort, Cathy speculated.

This year, with plenty of rain

so far, the lake is fairly high — much higher than in some years, when it has almost dried up, she said.

“It’s spring-fed,” she said, which keeps the water replenished throughout the summer, but the lake also depends on snow melt to completely fill it.

When full, the lake has a pleasant appearance, and it’s easy to imagine it full of summer picnickers. Just 16 km south of Brandon, the lake is in easy reach of Brandon.

At one time, there was even a suggestion of running the street car system out to the lake, but this never happened.

“It’s close enough that people could come in the horse-and-buggy days,” Cathy said.

In the 1920s, many groups, including churches, held picnics at the lake to enjoy the cool water and the wooded hills around the lake. At one time, there was a row of summer cot-



ABOVE, GRANT HAMILTON/BRANDON SUN; BELOW, FILE

tages along the south shore of the lake. These are now all year-round homes, Cathy said.

There was also a dock for boats, a launch offering cruises and a dance hall with a confectionary store. This location was well used until the early 1930s when Clear Lake opened in Riding Mountain National Park. From then on, Lake Clementi slowly lost its popularity — at least among vacationers.

But as far as Cathy is concerned, there’s no place better. “It’s perfect,” she said.

[ghamilton@brandonsun.com](mailto:ghamilton@brandonsun.com)



At top, Nelson Perry stands on his family's property, overlooking Lake Clementi. Once known as “Brandon's Summer Resort,” above, the lake has evolved into a semi-rural enclave of homes. Lake Clementi's popularity as a close-to-Brandon getaway ebbed when Clear Lake was opened in the 1930s.

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# Detailed Civic Planning Guidelines Hold Key To Our Coming Urban Expansion

*What the Future Holds for Brandon has Already Been Decided Down at City Hall*

BY ROBSON FLETCHER

One hundred years ago this summer, a British journalist named A.J. Dawson toured Western Canada and filed a report to his home newspaper, the London Standard.

Dawson began his journey through "The Land of the Future" in Winnipeg and then headed west towards the Pacific coast. One of his first stops along the way was a city celebrating its 25th anniversary and looking eagerly towards its future.

"Then comes Brandon," Dawson wrote, "the Wheat City, as its patriotic natives delight to hear it named."

Viewing the fledgling Canadian community through European eyes, Dawson wrote glowingly about Brandon's beauty and potential for growth.

"Brandon is one of the largest grain markets in Manitoba and is, besides, the distributing centre of the richest and best-developed portion of this province," he wrote.

"It is a really beautiful little city, handsomely laid out upon the rising slope of the richest wheat valley in Manitoba ... and the importance of the city as an agricultural centre is greatly enhanced by the annual fair and show held here, which is attended by farmers from all parts of the west. A bright, happy, well-looking place is Brandon, in which almost every resident owns his house and land, and distress is unknown."

A century later, much has changed but many things have remained the same. Brandon has grown by leaps and bounds but the Wheat City moniker has stuck, as have the annual summer and winter fairs and the importance of agriculture to the economic base.

But growth always comes with some pain and Brandon is familiar with that as well. Few if any residents would say that "distress is unknown" in the city today, as issues like homelessness and gang-related crime begin to crop up as the Wheat City matures into a more metropolitan urban centre.

The physical growth of a city also comes with some challenges, especially when it comes to what politicians refer to today as "infrastructure" but in the past was known simply as "pipes and roads."

What follows is an account, a quarter-century at a time, of some of the issues Brandon faced during its physical growth as a city since Dawson made his visit in 1907.

1932

According to official records, Brandon's population has maintained an upward trend since 1931 and city planners have had to continually expand the network of sewers, water lines and roadways to accommodate the growing number of citizens.

That task was particularly difficult during the Great Depression, but the era's widespread poverty didn't stop a sewer extension project in the year that the city celebrated its 50th anniversary. According to newspaper archives, the task got underway on Sept. 22, 1932, using a method that might seem cruel by today's standards but was deemed appropriate given the circumstances at the time.

"Throughout the construction of this extension, the city

will employ men who are drawing relief from city stores, and the amount that they earn will be credited against relief accounts," the Sept. 23, 1932 edition of the Brandon Sun reads.

"No actual cash will be paid out except to some needed key men. The men to be employed will be designated by the relief department and the men notified in time to be on hand for the shifts assigned. It is not known yet how long the men will be employed before a lay-off. That will depend on the policy set down by the city council in connection with the actual construction work."

1957

When Brandon was celebrating its 75th anniversary, the city was in the middle of another major sewer upgrade. This time the workers were paid in cash but the cost of the project was a matter of controversy.

Consultants told city officials that Brandon needed a storm sewer system to deal with excess rain water, and they pegged the total cost at \$2 million — a staggering sum at the time.

Despite the hefty price tag, city council took the advice seriously. Likely on their minds was a freak rainstorm four years earlier, in which the city received the most precipitation ever recorded on a single day. On June 2, 1953, a monitoring station in Brandon's west end took in 102.9 millimetres of rain.

The city put the matter to a referendum, and a slim majority of citizens approved the storm sewer project. Then, according to the May 28, 1957, edition of the Brandon Sun: "A fleet of heavy trucks transporting 200 feet of concrete and steel reinforced pipe, each six foot length of 66-inch pipe weighing 4.5 tons, arrived at Brandon from Winnipeg Monday and the first \$500,000 stage of a storm trunk system for the city got underway."

The storm sewer system has since been credited with saving many homes and businesses from flooding during heavy rainfalls, but it couldn't withstand the barrage of rain that fell in July of 2005 and inundated much of the city.

The same west-end monitoring station recorded 84 millimetres of rain in just four hours on the evening of July 7. The total average rainfall in Brandon for the entire month of July is 75.8 millimetres.

City staff are now considering additional sewer upgrades, but they say no system could be practically built to withstand so much water in so little time.

1982

By the time that Brandon was celebrating its centennial anniversary, industry had become a major part of the city's economy. The east-end industrial park was well established, with the Simplot fertilizer plant as one of the major employers.

But industrial growth comes with its own unique challenges. Just ask anyone who lived near the Simplot plant on May 3, 1982.

That's when the company was forced to make an emergency release of ammonia gas to avoid rupturing a high-pressure storage tank.

The Brandon Fire Department received nearly a

SOUTHWEST

Homes, homes and more homes — that's the plan for the southwestern part of Brandon as the city's population continues to grow.

Several housing developments are already underway in the southwest, and city planners expect more in the future.

Filling the empty lots within the city limits will be the first priority, according to the regional development plan, but there are also thoughts of Brandon expanding its boundaries to the southwest.

A large, L-shaped section of land that wraps around the existing city limits in the southwest has been identified for potential urban residential use.

City engineer Ted Snure said that would likely only happen "at the request of areas that wish to be annexed into the city," but added that some residents who live just outside the southwest boundary have already expressed interest in joining Brandon.

Within the city limits, Brandon's southwest quadrant is zoned almost entirely for residential development with some pockets of commercial zoning, mainly along 18th Street and Victoria Avenue.

All that space will be needed as the housing market in Brandon continues to heat up.

"The housing market in Brandon is strong, with a trend toward increasing numbers of single family dwellings constructed," the development plan states.

It adds: "Brandon has experienced a decreasing vacancy rate since 1991, creating a tight rental market."

There is no land zoned for industrial use in the southwest.

dozen calls from nearby residents who complained of eye and throat irritations and nausea due to the ammonia. Several reported seeing a dense cloud of the gas waft out of the fertilizer plant and towards their homes.

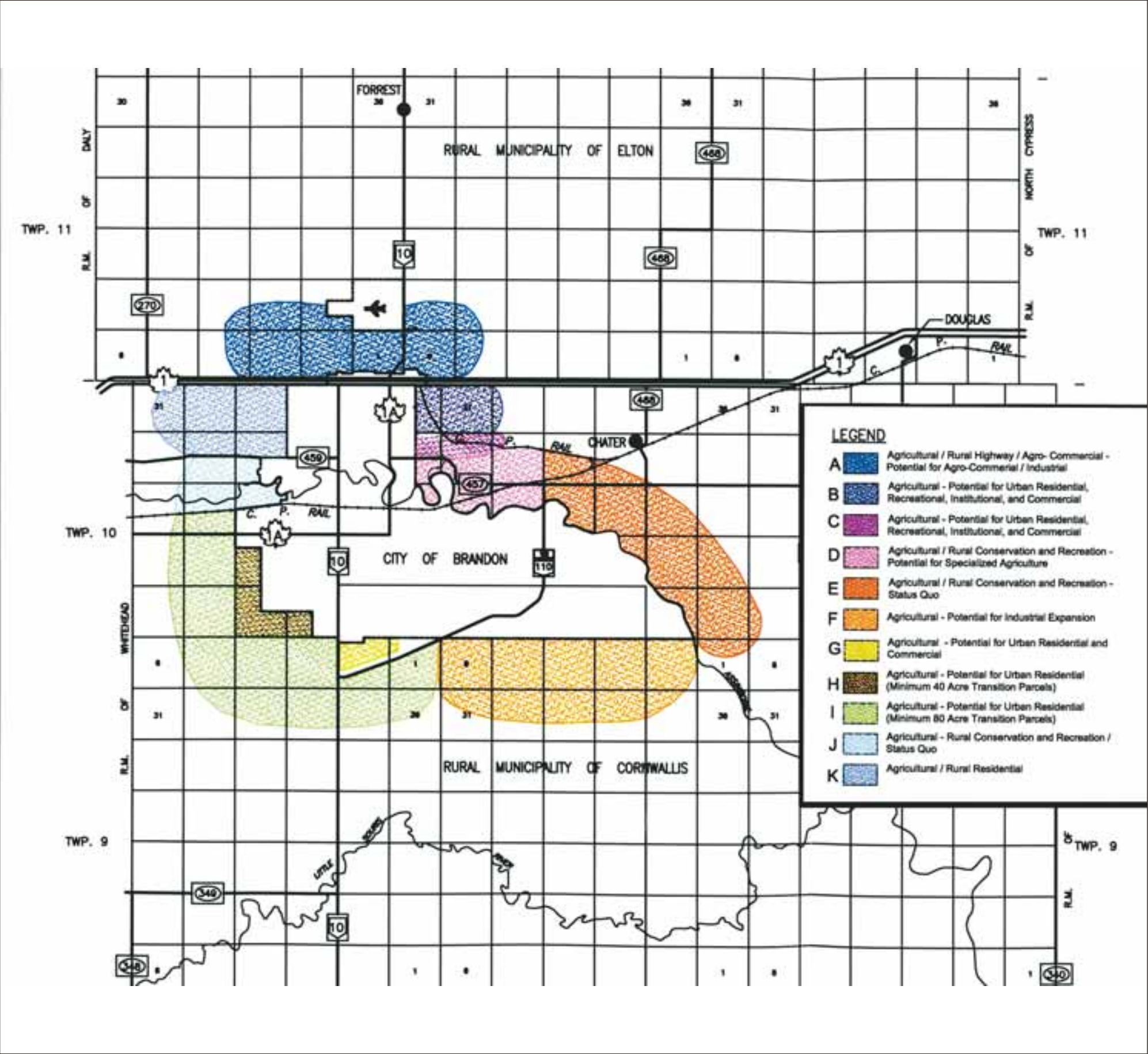
"For the most part," the Brandon Sun reported on May 4, 1982, "residents shut their windows and sat it out. Several who were contacted said they often can smell ammonia from the plant but the odor Sunday evening was more pronounced. One family said the smell drove them from their Victoria Avenue East home for the evening."

Fire Captain Alex Fraser, who was interviewed at the time, summed up the challenge of balancing industrial growth with residential growth.

"The way I see it, there seems to be a problem," he said. "We need industry, but we also need to live in this place."

2007

In March of this year, Brandon residents were introduced to Yogesh Goradia and his plan to build what became known as a "mini-city" on the



EAST

Industrial growth figures prominently into the future of Brandon's east end, according to the plan for future development.

An enormous section of land in the southeast — roughly the same size as all the rest of the city — is currently zoned for industrial use.

There are already some industrial developments in the near-east, like the Shape Foods plant under construction just past 17th Street East, but the regional development policy calls for "progressively heavier industrial uses being located further to the east."

That policy is one of the main reasons city officials objected to Yogesh Goradia's Promenade Project — a massive residential and commercial development proposal — on the southeast edge of the city. The long-term vision is to put the city's heaviest industry in that area, furthest away from existing houses.

Some existing industry could also move further east, if all goes according to the plan. "Industries that require railway service will be encouraged to locate in the eastern portion of Brandon," the development policy states.

"Railway dependent industries will be discouraged from locating along the C.N. railway line west of Frederick Street, in anticipation of the eventual abandonment of this line through residential areas of the city."

The province also plans to complete an eastern access route through Brandon, which would allow heavy trucks to bypass the city entirely when travelling between the Trans-Canada Highway and Highway 10 in the south.

Commercial development is not a big part of the east-end plan, with only a few small pockets zoned for retail development east of First Street.

More housing could be coming to the southeast, however, as the city has identified two stretches of land for infill development.

One section runs along the east side of First Street between Richmond Avenue and Patricia Avenue. The other section is between Maryland Avenue and Patricia Avenue, from 18th Street to First Street.

southeast edge of Brandon.

"What I have proposed is something I would say is pretty unusual," Goradia said in an interview from his Los Angeles home at the time. "We are providing almost everything — the commercial, cultural, residential and recreational elements."

The Promenade Project, as Goradia called it, would include 700 residential units with space for 2,500 to 3,000 people. The homes would range from large, single-family houses with two-acre yards to duplexes and fourplexes to condominiums and seniors residences.

The community would also include an 18-hole "world-class"

golf course, a 100-room hotel with a convention centre, movie theatres, retail stores, restaurants and office buildings. In addition, there would be an 80-acre park with an open-air amphitheatre capable of seating 2,000 people, as well as a 500-seat performing arts centre, children's park, Japanese tea house, "centre for research on natural healing" and a multi-denominational worship centre.

Goradia estimated it would take at least 10 years and as much as \$2 billion to build. It was a development the likes of which Brandon — or Manitoba for that matter — had never seen.

But the project immediately

ran into road blocks.

Mayor Dave Burgess slammed the idea as "urban sprawl," saying it doesn't fit with the development plan for the region. Other city councillors and city staff backed him up.

Business leaders and many citizens, however, stood up for the plan, saying it would bring a huge economic boost to the city.

The plan has since stalled. Fed up with what he described as red tape and political prejudice, Goradia issued an ultimatum to the city, saying he would abandon the project if he didn't get the regulatory go-ahead by May 15.

He has since backed off from

DOWNTOWN

While development has taken place all around it, Brandon's core area has been somewhat left behind.

The city's downtown is a shell of its former, bustling self, but there are plans to rejuvenate the once proud area.

The recently formed Downtown Task Force has been charged with finding ways to bring more people and business back to the core, and the city's development plan also includes special policies aimed at improving Brandon's historic downtown region.

"High-rise structures will be allowed, and buildings may extend to the property lines, in contrast to the lower development density throughout the rest of the city," the plan states.

"Certain types of institutional, social, recreational and cultural facilities, such as government offices, courthouses, and museums, will be encouraged to locate within downtown Brandon."

The idea is to "encourage a mix of uses including residential, commercial, institutional and park uses" in order to create a vibrant area in the heart of the city.

Turning that vision into reality, however, will likely be the biggest development challenge the city will face as it grows into the future.

Many of the 150 people who attended the recent Downtown Summit said the core area's image as "dead" and "unsafe" is the main barrier to improving it. Reversing that perception will be no easy task, but there are some encouraging signs.

The city recently announced plans to build a professional-calibre skateboard park in the downtown area, which many people believe will help draw more pedestrian traffic to the area.

The Brandon Police Service also plans to move closer to downtown once the renovations are complete on the former Safeway building at 10th Street and Victoria Avenue. The larger presence of police officers and vehicles is likely to reduce crime in the core area.

And the new president of the Brandon Chamber of Commerce has identified the improvement of downtown as one of the major goals he'd like to see the private sector take on.

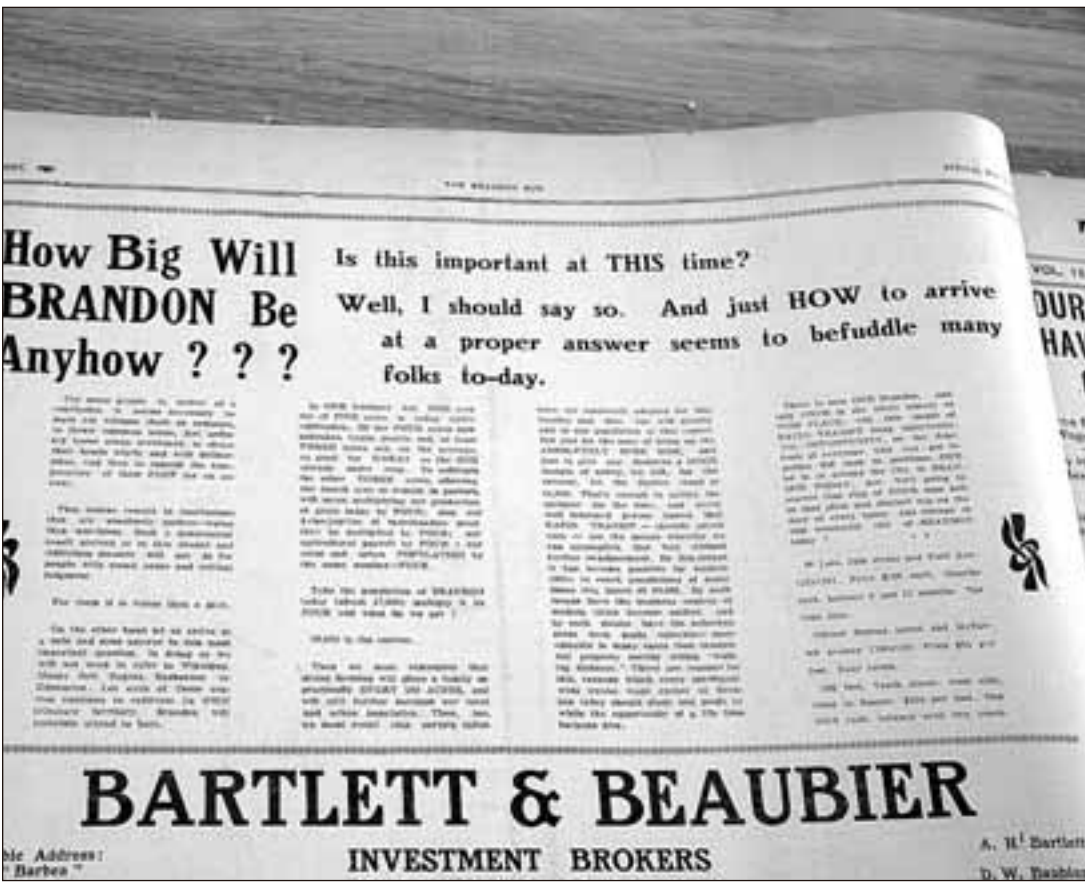
Lee Bass said a rejuvenated downtown should be "an important piece" of the vision for Brandon's future and added that it would provide an "additional economic engine that would help drive our city."

Bass said he'd like to see a variety of destination venues spring up in the downtown area, including "a family fun centre, a hotel, an IMAX theatre, venues to showcase local and travelling musical talent and live theatre, and possibly a Brandon general museum."

Promenade Project becomes a reality, all accounts suggest that Brandon will continue to grow and expand as it moves towards its 126th anniversary and beyond.

Regardless of whether the

[rfletcher@brandonsun.com](mailto:rfletcher@brandonsun.com)



*How fast will Brandon's population grow, and to what number?*

*An early advertorial attempted to "scientifically" answer that question, one that's still debated in coffeeshops around the city.*

*Read on, to find out what the advertisers were attempting to persuade people of — back in 1912.*

# How Big Will BRANDON Be Anyhow?

*Is this important at this time?*

**Well, I should say so. And just HOW to arrive at a proper answer seems to befuddle many folks to-day**

For some people to arrive at a conclusion it seems necessary to start out without chart or compass, to throw common sense, just ordinary horse sense overboard, to shake their heads wisely and with deliberation, and then to consult the temperature of their FEET for an answer.

This course results in conclusions that are absolutely useless — worse than useless. Such a nonsensical result arrived at in this absurd and ridiculous manner will not do for people with sound sense and critical judgment.

For them it is worse than a joke.

On the other hand let us arrive at a safe and sane answer to this most important question. In doing so we will not need to refer to Winnipeg, Moose Jaw, Regina, Saskatoon or Edmonton. Let each of these centre continue to cultivate its OWN tributary territory, Brandon will certainly attend to hers.

In OUR territory but ONE acre out of FIVE acres is today under cultivation. Of the FOUR acres now unbroken virgin prairie sod, at least THREE acres are, on the average, as good for WHEAT as the ONE under crop. To cultivate the other THREE acres, allowing

the fourth acre to remain in pasture, will mean multiplying our production of grain today by FOUR; also our consumption of merchandise must thus be multiplied by FOUR; our agricultural payroll by FOUR; our rural and urban POPULATION by the same number — FOUR.

Take the population of BRANDON today (about 17,000) multiply it by FOUR and what do we get?

68,000 is the answer.

Then we must remember that mixed farming will place a family on practically EVERY 160 ACRES, and will still further increase our rural and urban population. Then, too, we must recall that certain industries are eminently adapted for this locality and that, too, will greatly add to our population at this centre. But just for the sake of being on the ABSOLUTELY SURE SIDE, and just to give any doubters a HUGE margin of safety, we will, for the present, let the figures stand at 68,000. That's enough to satisfy the optimist for the time, and every well informed person knows that RAPID TRANSIT — electric street cars — are the means whereby we can accomplish that feat without further re-adjustment. By such means have the business centres of modern

cities become unified, and by such means have the suburban areas been made valuable — more valuable in many cases than residential property merely within "walking distance." There are reasons for this, reasons which every intelligent wide awake wage earner of Brandon today should study and profit by while the opportunity of a life time beckons him.

There is only ONE Brandon, and only ONCE in the whole history of THIS PLACE, will this magic of RAPID TRANSIT hang opportunity, yes OPPORTUNITY, on the door knob of everyone who can get together \$50 cash to purchase ONE lot in or around the City of BRANDON TODAY. Are YOU going to answer that ring of YOUR door bell or that plain and distinct rap on the door of every home and cottage in this wonderful city of BRANDON today?

20 Lots, 26th Street and Park Avenue (25x120). Price \$200 each. Quarter cash, balance 6 and 12 months.

Corner Second Street and McTavish Avenue (100x120) Price \$25 per foot. Easy terms. 100 feet, Tenth Street, west side, close to Rosser. \$550 per foot. One third cash, balance over two years.



# WE’VE ALWAYS BEEN A MILITARY TOWN

## From Camp Hughes In WWI To CFB Shilo And Afghan Mission

BY MATT GOERZEN

Brandon may be called the “Wheat City,” but ever since the start of the 20th century the community has held strong ties to Canada’s military — ties that continue to grow and mature even today.

That history began in 1910 when Camp Sewell was established not far from where the current Canadian Forces Base Shilo is stationed. It was eventually renamed in honour of Sam Hughes, then Canadian Minister of Militia (Minister of Defence).

Camp Hughes became a major training base during the First World War, with 11,000 soldiers having trained there in 1915 alone — and nearly 28,000 in 1916. It became the second-largest military training facility in the country, and the second-largest occupied area in Manitoba, behind Winnipeg. By 1916 the camp was raising whole battalions.

Training was eventually scaled down into depot battalions in both Brandon and Winnipeg, and Camp Hughes was closed.

### Trained overseas

“The soldiers would be trained in Winnipeg or Brandon, and shipped overseas,” said Maj. Marc George. “And then they would train further in England and get shipped to the front. There was no need to train thousands and thousands in Manitoba. It was more efficiently done in England.”

George is the Regimental Major of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery, which is based in Shilo. He also serves as vice-chairman of the artillery’s museum at the base — putting his history degree to good use.

The militia eventually reopened the site in 1920 and was manned by the regular army — which was somewhat small between the two great wars. The Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry’s C Battery trained in the camp.

“They would come in the summer, all the militia would spend a week there to get trained up,” George said.

Camp Hughes was formally closed in 1933, and the soldiers moved to a new site five kilometres south, the newly established Camp Shilo. But until the start of the Second World War, the camp was used by part-time reservists for training purposes.

### Brandon lost to Shilo

“The majority of soldiers were in the reserves,” George said. “But when the Second World War breaks out, the units in Brandon mobilize.”

Camp Shilo eventually became a full-time base in 1940. The A3 Canadian Artillery Training Centre opened at Camp Shilo during the war, and a second school opened in Brandon, though it eventually closed in 1944.

Following the war, a debate raged whether Shilo or Brandon would become the permanent military base — a battle Brandon lost. Eventually, the military closed its holdings in Brandon, and used the Shilo centre to train Canadian gunners during the Cold War, until 1970 when the training centre moved to CFB Gagetown.

... SEE ‘STRONG TIES’  
ON PAGE NINE



RCA MUSEUM ARCHIVES

Camp Hughes became a major training base during the First World War, with 11,000 soldiers having trained there in 1915 alone — and nearly 28,000 in 1916. It became the second-largest military training facility in the country, and the second-largest occupied area in Manitoba, behind Winnipeg. By 1916, the camp was raising whole battalions.

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‘Sifton Avenue’ trenches in Camp Hughes



L to R: Pam, Jim, Tom & Rod

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**THE PLAN**

The Commonwealth Air Training Plan was signed in December 1939, Canada had only 4,000 people in the Royal Canadian Air Force but enrolment reached 250,000 by the end of 1943. Aircrew personnel from Australia, New Zealand, England and Canada were all trained under The Plan. Canada was chosen because of its preferable climate and the fact it was far from the dangers of enemy activity. The Plan was referred to by Winston Churchill as Canada's greatest contribution to the allied victory and referred to by President Roosevelt as the "aerodrome of democracy."

Brandon, Shilo ties strong

... FROM 'MILITARY TOWN' ON PAGE EIGHT

"To keep the base open, they moved the artillery regiment — now called the 1st Battalion Royal Canadian Horse Artillery — from Winnipeg to Shilo," George said. "Then the German army started to train in Shilo as well. And there was the Royal Canadian Artillery Battle Schools — all the private soldiers trained in Shilo until the 1990s."

The 21st Century has added a new chapter to the base. In 2001, the 2nd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry moved from Winnipeg to Shilo, breathing new life into the facility following the departure of the German army six years earlier.

**One large community**

George says the two communities of Brandon and Shilo are more like one large community. Several soldiers and their families now call Brandon home, and their children attend Brandon schools.

"If you look at the two communities, they're not really two. (Shilo) is almost a suburb of Brandon. How many soldiers have met their spouses in Brandon? I would guess that about 40 per cent of the soldiers that are employed on base live in Brandon.

Those ties have become especially visible since Canada joined the mission in Afghanistan. Of the 50 Canadian soldiers that have died in Afghanistan, eight hailed from CFB Shilo — seven with 2PPCLI, and one from the 1RCHA.

"Most blocks in Brandon will have a soldier who lives on that block overseas fighting. I also think the reserve unit in Brandon, 26th Field Regiment has been here 99 years. It has always been formed of people from Brandon," George said.

**Brandon, Shilo ties deep**

"They've gone to war twice. People of Brandon have been training for war and going to war out of (the Brandon Armoury) for almost a century. The fact that they've been gunners now for 71 years of their existence has just strengthened the bonds to Shilo — it's another tie that Brandon has. The ties are very deep. I don't think you could make them any closer or stronger."

The 26th Field Artillery Regiment, formerly the 26th Field Artillery Brigade, is still stationed in Brandon today at the Brandon Armoury.

A vintage airplane from the Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum flies past the Riverbank Discovery Centre earlier this month during Brandon 125 celebrations.

COLIN CORNEAU/BRANDON SUN



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**HAPPY 125th BRANDON!**

## HUMOUR FROM 1892

**TEACHER:** “Henry, what are the seven ages of Man?”

**HENRY:** “Luggage, garbage, storage, mortgage, postage, shrinkage and dotage.”

# Happy 125th!



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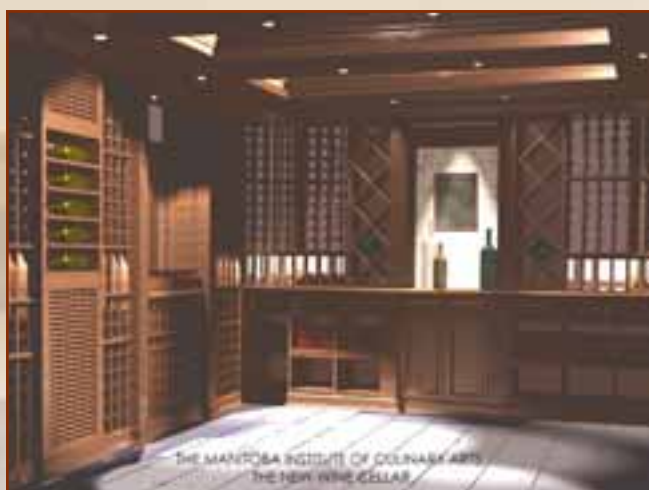


# Honouring the Past, Building for the Future



This September, the Manitoba Institute of Culinary Arts will welcome the students and staff of Assiniboine Community College's diploma programs in Culinary Arts and Hotel and Restaurant Management in its new facility. The Institute, situated in the former Brandon Mental Health Centre's Nurses' Residence, will also offer a wide variety of continuing studies programming and contract training for the hospitality and food service sector.

With the new facility, we will be able to offer exciting new events and programs for the community. A sneak peak of the events and programming offered to the public includes:



## September

- Auzzie BBQ—join visiting guest chefs from the Billabong Restaurant as they throw a few shrimps and other treats from *Down Under* on the BBQ.
- Grand Opening Week
- Building Dedication
- Tours
- Wine Appreciation
- Professional Bartending
- Cellar Tastings

## October

- Beer Festival
- Wine Basics – Level 1
- Wine and Chocolate
- Pairing Wine with Starters
- A Taste of the Caribbean
- A Taste of East India
- Soups, sauces, stews
- Coffee Connoisseur
- Corporate Team Building with Cooking
- Single Suppers
- Winnipeg restaurateurs from LuxSole talk with students about purchasing product locally as well as how to run an award winning restaurant.

## November

- Foundation Gala Dinner
- Christmas Luncheon
- Navigating Wine Lists
- Chef Session
- Understanding Scotch
- A Taste of France
- A Taste of South Africa
- A Taste of South America
- Help with Christmas Dinner
- Christmas Baking
- Gingerbread Houses

## 2008

### January 2008

- Roaring Twenties Cocktail Party
- Wine Appreciation
- A Taste of New Orleans
- Healthy Eating

### February 2008

- Wine Festival
- Wine and Chocolate
- Desserts and Dessert Wines
- Chef Session
- Wine and Cheese

### March 2008

- Grey Owl Restaurant
- Pairing Food and Wine
- Wine Basics – Level 2
- Understanding Scotch
- Couples Cooking
- Cookies for Kids

### April 2008

- Barbequing

### May 2008

- A Taste of Tuscany
- Alcohol Servers Responsibility

## Coming Soon

- Art of Pastry
- Sushi for Beginners
- Intro to Sugar Works
- Dinner and a Movie
- Dine & Dance

**Thank you** to the many donors who have supported the relocation of the College to Brandon's North Hill. You have allowed us to develop stunning new facilities and exciting program ideas that ensure that the College is recognized for exceptional learning experiences.

Please contact the College Advancement and External Relations office at 204.725.8722 for more information about these or other Institute events.



Campaign Assiniboine is almost done,  
however, there are still ways YOU can be part of Brandon's  
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**Your gift** of \$100 to Campaign Assiniboine will be used to support the relocation of the College's Manitoba Institute of Culinary Arts into this building.

**Gourmets** can support the teaching kitchen and culinary theatre with a gift of \$100 which will purchase additional small wares used in the teaching kitchen and culinary theatre.

**Food lovers** can support the dining room with a gift of \$100 which will be used to purchase a placesetting of fine china to be used in the Grey Owl Dining Room—beautiful dishes for beautiful food, served in a beautiful room.

**Wine lovers** can support the cellar through a donation of \$100 which will purchase six Eisch Bordeaux glasses that enhance the wine tasting experience.

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# BRANDON SUN

Recording Westman's History  
One Day at a Time





# In Search of Fort Brandon

*The City Shares a Name With a Long-Forgotten Fur-Trading Outpost — Could Two Rank Amateurs Pinpoint Its Remains?*



BY CURTIS BROWN  
AND GRANT HAMILTON

NEAR TREESBANK — It was supposed to be so simple: a two-hour hike along the meandering Assiniboine River to an easy-to-find relic of Brandon history.

All we discovered after six hours in ankle-deep mud, however, were plenty of wood ticks and that company cars weren't built to cross rushing spring streams.

But even though we didn't discover the actual ruins of Fort Brandon by the banks of the Assiniboine River, it was a far better way to spend a Monday than chained to our desks.

In the spirit of the great explorers who came westward, our plan was to paddle down the Assiniboine River by canoe. But our first discovery was that floating down the Assiniboine voyageur-style was not going to work: Curtis' dad sold their little-used canoe a week ago, while Grant's water ride wasn't exactly sea-worthy. So it was time for Plan B: the hike to Fort Brandon.

According to most historical sources, the area where we were headed had been liberally sprinkled with forts. The Hudson's Bay Company had built at least three, each named some variation of "Fort Brandon" or "Brandon House." Within a couple of miles, the North West Company had built a competing fort. And even a splinter group, the independent X Y Company, had built a fort.

Geez, we'd be lucky to not stumble across some rotting palisades. But we didn't want just any old fort — we were after big game: the first, the oldest, the original Fort Brandon.

According to G.F. Barker's book "Brandon: A City," a city that was only 12 years old in 1894 was already gearing up for a centennial commemoration. The original Fort Brandon had been built on the "South-West half, 19-8-16."

With ruins of the original fort still visible at that time, plans were made for a huge picnic and 100th anniversary celebration. However, our city forefathers lacked follow-through, and there is no record of a celebration ever being held.

We, on the other hand, were full of vim and vigour. We deciphered the mysterious (to us) section-township-range numbers, and pinpointed the area along the Assiniboine along which to search.

We were armed as well with a fort description that included it being located on the south shore, near a bend in the river, with a gate that faced east. Based upon our maps, there seemed only one place to go.

So we set off on a Monday morning with only one modern-day convenience in hand (Tim Hortons coffee, black) to the approximate site of Fort Brandon.

... SEE 'RIDERSHIP' ON PAGE TWENTY

... SEE 'FIENDISHLY' ON PAGE SIXTEEN

## BACK WHEN THE DOWNTOWN WAS A HOPPIN' PLACE

BY FRED MCGUINNESS

In the early '30s, communications in Westman were best described as terrible. Hydro service was slow in getting to farms and towns. Roads were in poor shape and the province lacked the funds to improve them. Only the brave or foolhardy began a trip to town after a heavy rainfall.

But there was the occasional bright spot. Even in that period in which the economy was making a tedious recovery from the Depression, a custom had developed which elevated flagging spirits: Rosser Avenue and the 100 block of 10th Street on a summertime Saturday night.

Coasting down the 10th Street hill on my bike, I could see illumination in places it was not ordinarily seen: Hutching's Drugs, Orchard's Hardware, Blossom Shoppe, O.L. Stark and Sons, Smart's Stationery, Miss Phipp's Millinery — there were even more loafers than usual in front of the pool room. There was a lineup in front of the Strand as film enthusiasts waited, money in hand, to see the latest from Hollywood.

Did every place of enterprise participate in this bazaar? Not

quite. The banks and the law offices were locked tight, and in this period, credit unions had no main-street presence. Apart from those few locked-tight premises, every merchant and staff members stood at the ready for the business rush they viewed as the "mortgage-lifter."

There was even an informal type of segregation: shoppers and non-shoppers. Those persons who lived in Brandon could buy things every day of the week, and most of them did. The buyers on Saturday night were farmers and their families, most of whom could not make purchases without a special trip to Brandon, or their nearby country town.

The merchant who was open for business, but having a quiet moment, often moved to the front of his store, his presence acting as a silent announcement that he and his merchandise were available.

Dudley Crawford stood by the door of his drug store. Next door, Herbie Stewart, just one of the local hockeyists to make it to the NHL, could be seen in his magazines-and-tobacco shop.

... SEE 'BETTER ROADS' ON PAGE TWENTY-TWO



COURTESY S.J. MCKEE ARCHIVES, BRANDON UNIVERSITY

Streetcar service was always fraught with financial peril for the city.

## RIDING THE TOWN'S RAILS

BY FRED MCGUINNESS

Somewhere in the lower level of Brandon's city hall, there just has to be a tall stack of cardboard boxes. It will require this many to hold the files of the city's street-car service.

This is the type of topic which tests the mettle of the councillors. It must have been on the agenda for every council

meeting from 1912 to 1931. It was frequently the subject of a referendum.

If you are especially observant, you may still see traces of a transportation system which never did know buoyant times. Over many years, when the asphalt wore thin on Sixth Street about a dozen paces east of what we once knew as Yeager's Furs, the rails would shine in the

summer sun. When you drive southbound on First Street around the bend in the Assiniboine, you will observe a row of fence posts which keep you from driving into the drink. Well, those are the remains of street-car rails dug up on the orders of frugal councillors.

... SEE 'RIDERSHIP' ON PAGE TWENTY

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# No Failure To Communicate

## Postal Memorabilia Tells Brandon Story One Stamp At a Time

BY MATT GOERZEN

A Calgary-based stamp collector with Brandon roots has posted an extensive collection of rare Brandon and Westman stamps online, just in time for the city's 125th celebrations.

"I've bought them over a fairly long period of time," said vice president of regional groups for the British North America Philatelic Society, Bob Lane.

Lane, who grew up in Brandon, says most of his collection has gone beyond the simple collection of stamps. While his father was also a philatelist and collected stamps, Lane collects postal history.

### Early example

Among his prized collection is one of the earliest known examples of a Brandon, Manitoba post mark, on a post card sent to a Lt.-Col. O'Malley in Ontario. Unlike today's 51 cent postage stamps, the Nov. 1881 postcard sports a one-cent postal rate.

A letter, dated Nov. 22, 1881, was intended for a Mrs. J. M. Fee in Ontario, part of an extensive "Fee" collection of letters in Lane's possession that were sent to and from Brandon between 1881 and 1885.

Also of interest are a number of post marks Lane has placed on the website that show how the railways were used as traveling post offices between Winnipeg and Brandon, and other communities.

### Sort on the train

"They would sort it on the train," Lane said. "This was the Canadian Northern Railway that operated between Winnipeg and Brandon. I have the whole list of them here. There were five different ones that involved Brandon."

Some of the early postcards in Lane's collection include correspondence from the Brandon Times, the Patmore Nursery Co. Ltd., a postcard written by renowned Manitoba naturalist Percy Criddle, and an envelope from 1891 advertising the city of Brandon as "The Wheat City of Manitoba," put out by the Brandon Board of Trade.

"It was the first time it was called the "Wheat City of Manitoba," Lane said.

Lane has his extensive collection online for anyone interested in Brandon's history. To read more, go to [philatelic.org/Brandon125/](http://philatelic.org/Brandon125/).

[mgoerzen@brandonsun.com](mailto:mgoerzen@brandonsun.com)



Above are pictures of Brandon postal offices with a handful of examples of postal marks and envelopes that have been compiled by Calgary-based collector Bob Lane, who grew up in Brandon.

### IN THE YEAR ... 1882

By midsummer, Brandon's population had reached the 3,000 mark; business places, including four banks, saw- and planing-mills, totalled 200. There were Dominion land and registry offices, "extensive and handsomely-erected" livery stables.

### Splendid bridge

"In addition, a splendid bridge has been thrown over the Assiniboine ... while approaches to another bridge connecting the country north of Brandon with 18th Street are rapidly nearing completion."

### IN THE YEAR ... 1886

Joe Bond, a store employee, delivered groceries and frequently drew water to the North-side residence of

Annie Nichol who, in turn, mended that young man's clothing. On a Sunday night (having accepted an invitation of the previous evening) he reached the lady's domicile — and was met with gunfire.

Fending off further attack, Bond eventually located medical men who found it immediately impossible to remove a bullet lodged in his head. Newly-appointed Police Chief Duncan posted an all-night watch on the house of ill-repute, to effect an arrest next morning.

Miss Nichol, alias "Dandy" French, "seemed annoyed when she heard that Bond was still living and "wished to heaven" she had killed him." The 32-year-old woman, known as a saddle-expert and accomplished shot — "able to shoot the head off a chicken at 50 yards" — was remanded pending a report on the injured man's condition.

But "Dandy" claimed the shooting "justifiable in self-protection" and authorities were only too happy to see her depart for distant pasture.

## They Came From Brandon: Henry Champ

Henry Champ has travelled from one end of the world to the other digging up the news, but he took his first steps in the media business right here in Brandon.

Champ, born in Brandon in 1939, began his illustrious journalism career in the Brandon Sun's sports department. He later left the newspaper business for television, joining the fledgling CTV network in 1968. He contributed

to the network's news program, W-FIVE, from 1978 to 1982 before making the move across the border to the United States.

Champ worked for NBC for 10 years and was dispatched to the American news network's bureaus in London and Frankfurt, Germany. He also served a stint as NBC's Congressional correspondent in Washington, a beat he had covered

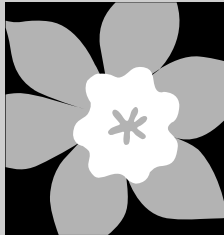
years earlier while still with CTV.

In 1993, Champ returned to his native country to work on CBC Newsworld out of Halifax, but it wasn't long before Champ was on his way out of the country again. He is once again on Capitol Hill, working as one of the CBC's Washington correspondents. He did make the trip home in 2005 to receive an honorary doctorate from Brandon University.

# Happy 125<sup>th</sup> Brandon!

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# Flood of the Century

From: “When the River Assiniboine Was Fully a Mile Wide,” printed in the Brandon Sun on June 18, 1927.

There never was such a flood as in 1882, when the whole valley was a lake — Most cities have their points in history from which to make their reckoning. Brandon's is the spring of 1882, the year of the flood. To have been here at flood time marks you as conspicuous, but to have been here before the flood — ah! That

places one on a pinnacle by himself. Well, that was a flood! The whole valley was one great lake. “At the time, there had not been any bridges erected, and where there are now high grades across the valley to the present structures, were just low swamps like all the rest. There was no obstruction to dam the water,

and it just swept over everything. The only means of crossing the river at this time, was a ferry near the site of the Western Canada Flour Mills, and the ford at Grand Valley, but both ferry and ford were soon out of business. All this made hardships, for many were waiting in Brandon for a chance to get their belongings over the river where they had taken land. Some had stock here and had to keep it at great

expense, for feed was high. Some tempted fate in boating and rafting stuff across the swift stream with unmarked channel and unknown current. One determined person, early in May after waiting for weary days, swam his horses behind a canoe, a distance as he swam, of nearly a mile, starting as he did, about the foot of eleventh street, a little below the track, and landing well below first street on the far

side. The whole flat was one placid lake, with here and there a tuft of green showing where underneath were the trees and willows that grow there in numbers today. From landing across its widest point, the river was almost a mile wide, and presented a most magnificent sight. What a pity, it was often remarked, that such a width of river was not a permanency!.



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PHOTO FROM 'THE FORT BRANDON STORY' BY ROY BROWN

# CAIRN MARKS WRONG PLACE

## Rotary Club Research Revealed Location of One Fort, But Not the Right One

In summer of 1928, several historically-inclined people uncovered, upon hilly terrain some 15 miles from the city, fragments indicative of an early trading post.

Research by dedicated Brandon Rotarians revealed that it was the site upon which Brandon House No. 2 had been built in 1824, with even the date and the hour recorded. Elaborate plans were made and then, at 10 a.m. on the morning of Oct. 7, 1928 — exactly 100 years after “Brandon House” construction had begun, Manitoba Attorney-General W.J. Mayor, before more than 1,000 spectators, unveiled a Union Jack-draped granite tablet bearing the inscription:

“Brandon House No. 2. Established on this site 10 a.m., October 7, 1828, by Chief Trader Francis Heron of the Hudson's Bay Company. Abandoned 1832. This cairn dedicated October 7, 1928. Erected by Brandon Rotary Club.”

Some five decades later, however, local historian Roy Brown would take issue with the Rotary research.

Drawing on as many primary sources as he could find, Brown published, in 1974, “The Fort Brandon Story,” which revised the historical map.

Not only did he move the first Fort Brandon almost four miles down the river, but he deduced that the Rotary cairn did not mark the second Brandon House, but rather the

fourth or fifth — and most recent — incarnation of Brandon House.

Reading Brown's book, which is available at the Brandon Public Library, gives a clear sense of the every-shifting nature of the fur trade in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Battles between the Hudson's Bay Company, the Northwest Company and the splinter fur-trading group XY Company were commonplace, with races for strategic fort locations and raids on one another.

However, there was often a sense of camaraderie as well, with parties that would last until dawn, and end up with one group inviting the other across the river for breakfast.

Because Grant and Curtis were looking for the original Fort Brandon, they were nowhere near the cairn erected in 1928 by the Rotary Club. In fact, they have no idea if it's still visible at all.

But if you're interested in finding it, directions from the time are:

In the vicinity of Waggle Springs, it is reached by driving east on the lower road to Winnipeg, turning south at a point two miles west of Douglas [schoolhouse], then east and south until the river is sighted.

The cairn is located in the north-east corner of Section 29-9-17. However, would-be archaeologists should be aware that they might be trespassing on private property.

# Fort Fiendishly Difficult to Find For First-Time Explorers

...FROM 'FORT BRANDON' ON PAGE THIRTEEN

Heading south of CFB Shilo on PTH 340, we turned at a dirt road running east of the road just past where it crosses the Assiniboine.

The book said the fort was in the southwest corner of this particular section, so we parked the car and followed the edge of the pasture on foot towards what looked like a tree-lined river bank. Trudging through sloppy grass and mud for a quarter-mile, we came to a sharp drop-off obscured by bushes and oak trees.

Before long, we found a fast-rushing stream curling through the trees. Following along where we could, we were certain it would soon lead straight to the river and thus, long-lost Fort Brandon. We rounded a corner and looked up — there was a wooden wall protruding out from a clearing. Could this be it?

We hurried up the steep bank, only to discover the wood — the quality of which can be found at any Home Depot or Rona outlet — was actually used to hold cattle, not defend against attacks by rival fur traders. And if that wasn't depressing enough, it turned out that the fence actually led to a larger farmyard. This was no fort!

There was no answer. We followed a lane out of the farm and could see from this narrow strip of hayland where the river lay.

Now that we had found the river and knew roughly where the creek ran, we figured we could find where they meet. But first, we spotted someone in the first farmyard we visited. We asked Jean-Michel if he had heard of any old forts around.

He did us one better. Not only did he draw us a map and show us an easy path to the junction of the creek and the river (which, incidentally, was right back where we started on our

watery trek — we zigged when we should have zagged), but he also pointed out how we could have driven most of the way there.

Amiably, he took us in his truck back to our car, and we drove up to tackle the Fort Brandon search from a different (and closer) angle.

We started off at the trailhead, letting our feet dry a bit in the midday sun as we looked for the place where the creek emptied into the Assiniboine. It appeared to be well below the treeline, which once again masked a steep drop-off that required us to navigate not one, but two barbed wire fences.

Swatting away swarms of mosquitoes (“Why doesn't the city spray out here,” Grant wondered), we found the riverbank and sure enough, the point where the creek spilled into the riverbend.

Here we were. Fort Brandon — or what remained of it — must be set back into the trees. We followed the creek in and noticed that it created a narrow point on its north bank between it and the river. The problem was, there was no way across.

Well, there was the obvious way. Dry feet had been nice for a minute, but there was a fort to be found. We stepped in, discovering not only a carp swimming past our feet, but also that there are several points where the water was near-knee-deep. Undaunted, we slogged through.

Grant even ventured a taste of the clear creek water, pronouncing it sweet, though Curtis noted that he didn't exactly fill a water bottle with the stuff.

When we stepped up onto the far bank of the creek, we expected to see the grass-covered remains of a fort. Or, perhaps the cairn the Rotary Club had put out here in 1928, commemorating where they believed the story of Brandon had all started.

(See the story at left to see how they were wrong.)

We hacked through the bush in vain, noticing nothing that would suggest this was once a place of commerce and trade. Frustrated, we came to a clearing that lay between a steep bank and an unnaturally-high hill covered with trees.

This had to be it, Grant said. Curtis concurred. It was already mid-afternoon, and the chances that a well-preserved fort would just be sitting there in the bush seemed slim indeed. Two hundred years of overgrowth alone would be enough to hide the site — a site that was already a battered ruin when Brandon was founded 17 miles up the river in 1882.

Fort Brandon remains out there, waiting to be rediscovered. But is it really as lost as we thought?

Home, after a steaming shower and a thorough thrice-over for ticks, Grant popped into the Brandon Public Library, non-fiction section, Dewey decimal number 971.273 Bro.

In 1974, local historian Roy Brown combed through the historical records, pinpointing — and correcting — the locations of all of the fur-trading forts along that stretch of river. He published his findings in a slim volume called “The Fort Brandon Story.”

By his count, there could have been as many as 11 forts and similar buildings in that area — he even provided maps, and photos that showed where a high school expedition had scoured the area, finding old square nails and a metal implement, in the early '70s.

So how close did we get, given our superficial research and lacking dozens of high school lackeys?

Frankly, we were right on the money. Well, almost.

Brown's maps show the original Fort Brandon to have been

located on the far bank of the river from where we thought we had found something. Mind you, Brown's maps also show a large island in the Assiniboine that's no longer there.

Just about where we thought we found a mound that could once have been a log building is where Brown marks the location of a North West Company fort. And, we appear to have walked right across the location of X Y Fort, without thinking twice about it.

We may have been poor explorers, more like Laurel and Hardy than Lewis and Clark. But did the other great explorers always find what they were looking for? The history books probably don't tell you about the blunders they had along the way. They don't share how Samuel de Champlain stumbled down a hill, or how La Verendrye forgot to tie up the canoes the day before he was forced to portage la prairie somewhere near here.

Besides, what fun is it being found if you've never been lost?

### Things We Learned:

- ☞ Mosquito bites are more painful on your eyelid than anywhere else — even on your, uh, unmentionable areas.
- ☞ Research is more informative than random traipsing through the bush. But much less fun.
- ☞ Although they don't have much in the way of ankle support, an old pair of Rockport casual dress shoes makes for surprisingly sturdy — and comfortable — hiking footwear.
- ☞ Ticks are tenacious little devils.

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75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

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11:00 – 7:00 pm **Heritage Market Place**  
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12:00 – 4:00 pm **28<sup>th</sup> Annual International Antique Classic & Shine Car Show**

1:00 pm Guided Garden Tour  
Choral and Dance concerts at International Peace Garden Music Camp  
Governors Traveling Art Exhibition  
Drummers and Story Telling by Dan Jerome  
Author Roxane Salonen of “P is for Peace Garden”

2:00 pm Vintage Fashion Show and Afternoon Tea

2:45 pm Miss Peace Garden, Alyson Wilhelmi, performing

3:00 pm Exotic Kite Flying (unusual kites available for purchase)  
Scavenger Hunt  
Guided Garden Tour  
Lefty's Little Steppers with Ryan & John  
Keplin, Turtle Mountain Metis Dancers  
(www.tbnci.net, 701-246-3827)

4:00 pm **Tribute to Peace**

5:00 pm **Hot Air Balloon Rides**  
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6:00 pm **BBQ Supper Available**

7-9 pm Miss Peace Garden, Alyson Wilhelmi  
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HOMECOMING WEEKEND

WE CELEBRATE THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF BRANDON







# NURSERY PUTS BRANDON ON MAP

## From Father To Son, Patmore Love And Knowledge of Trees Transformed Prairies

BY FRED MCGUINNESS

Please do not harass me if your name is not in the following list, and should be. For me to do the definitive list of sons who followed fathers in enterprise would take a month's research in the city directories.

After some casual noodling I wrote the following list: Gooden and Gooden, Clement and Clement, Robertson and Robertson, Meighen and Meighen, McDonald and McDonald, Brown and Brown, and for a (temporary) conclusion, I mention Murray and Leech: two firms now in their third generation and expanding.

What brought this to mind was the matter of a father-son combo whose combined activities changed the face of this community and many others as well. I am talking about Henry Lewis Patmore and his son Richard, better known as Dick.

H.L. Patmore, just call me Harry, was born in England and into a life in horticulture. On the family farm at Hertfordshire, they grew nursery stock and cutflowers for the London market. As soon as he was old enough to make change, young Harry worked in the family stall at famed Covent Gardens. It was during his boyhood introduction to flower sales that he read a newspaper report about the rich loam near a place called Brandon House in far-off Canada.

He plunged right into nursery work upon his arrival in Brandon. Always prepared to reach out into the community, he worked with Dr. S.A. Bedford when this professional agriculturist was planning what we once called the "Experimental Farm."

The Patmore timing was completely fortuitous. He incorporated his nursery in 1883 and two years later the CPR main line led west from Brandon and opened up those treeless plains for the hundreds of thousands of settlers' families.

That adjective "treeless" was important to Patmore. The Great Plains were kept treeless because of grass fires started by lightning strikes. With no cultivated land to act as fire guards, they burned everything in front of them.

Those settling families wanted tree protection of the type they had known in their home countries. They needed Patmore seedlings.

Harry Patmore opened in business with a partner named Brock, but he soon bought out the partner and began



an expansion program.

Harry could never have known that some day he would be celebrated as the founder of the oldest nursery in continuous operation in Canada West. He produced his first catalogue in 1890. In 1913, in Shofield's book, "Story of Manitoba," you could read that "Patmore's is shipping nursery stock all over the country from sales offices in Brandon and Saskatoon."

At the same time, he was able to ship stock into the western states. The statistics are impressive; he was selling the production from 400 acres of nursery stock and also selling each year the cultivars from 60,000 square feet of greenhouse space. He became the Canadian sales agent for the seed merchant Sutton and Sons, of Reading, England.

From seeds and flowers, Harry Patmore made the important step into trees. Settlers just learning to live with the weather and soil conditions of the Canadian Prairies soon learned they needed shelterbelts for protection from the winds, but also to trap snow that would provide moisture at the same time it reduced erosion.

Patmore was as venturesome as he was industrious. He designed and had built what he called a "tree plough." With this implement, and 10 horses and 20 men, he learned he could relocate mature trees of any size.

Motivated by his profound love for his chosen country, he maintained a busy schedule of public service. He served for 10 years on Brandon's city council. He was a perennial member of the parks board, and was responsible for the planting of tens of thousands of trees in Brandon parks, on the boulevards and in Exhibition Park. During the Great Depression he assisted the Salvation Army in providing food and other necessities to the unemployed. In 1977, 30 years after his death, his name was included among those pioneers recognized by the Manitoba Agricultural Hall of Fame.

Succeeding him was his son Dick. Dick Patmore graduated in 1934 with a

WHERE HIS FATHER HARRY HAD BEEN A GENERALIST, DICK WAS A SPECIALIST; HE WANTED CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE SPECIMENS HE BRED AND SOLD ... IT WAS A TENET OF THE PATMORE FAITH THAT HOMES AND FARMS SHOULD BE PROTECTED BY TREES AND SHRUBS.

degree in economics from Brandon University, but spent his life in the propagation of select varieties of trees. Where his father had been a generalist,

Dick was a specialist; he wanted constant improvement in the specimens he bred and sold.

Dick Patmore could adapt to changing times. When the federal government, through PFRA, began distributing shelterbelt trees to farmers, Dick decided that the company's future was to be found in ornamentals.

It was said of Dick Patmore by his fellow nurserymen, that he had an unerring eye for the perfect specimen. When he found one of those, he wanted to propagate it in order that succeeding generations would have the same characteristics. Many of his propagations still bear his name, such as the Brandon Pyramidal Cedar, a dense columnar evergreen which is suitable to the dry prairie climate.

Painstaking selection from long rows of plantings enabled Patmore's to develop lines which endure through the cold, dry winters.

It was a tenet of the Patmore faith that homes and farms should be protected by trees and shrubs. In his writings in horticultural journals, Dick Patmore urged his readers to establish a master planting plan and follow it over the years. It grieved him when homeowners purchased nursery stock that was raised in warm countries and thus unable to withstand the cold of Manitoba winter.

Dick's most successful introduction is patented as "Patmore Green Ash fraximus pennsylvanica."

Its history is a typical Dick Patmore

story. In 1967, in a motor tour of Western Canada, he drove through Vegreville, Alta., to look at the trees. He spotted what he judged was a perfect specimen of ash. He took a sample of scion wood and shipped it home for propagation. In the next several years he tested succeeding generations grown in his own plantation as well as those grown in the CDA Research Station at Morden. The final selection had clearly identifiable characteristics: an especially shiny leaf and elliptical crown. Four major nursery companies in the U.S. now produce the Patmore Ash under contract to the Brandon nursery.

Dick Patmore died in 1979. Before his death he had arranged to sell the company to Jake and Mary Driedger, who were farming near Brookdale at that time. Jake and Mary represented a flawless succession. While he was farming grain, Jake had always set aside for nursery stock which he sold locally. Mary was born into a greenhouse family at Yarrow, B.C. Mary took over the flower department while Jake busied himself with trees, shrubs, and related activities.

When the Driedgers retired in 2007, they sold the company to Kent Mulholland, a native of Killarney who studied horticulture at Olds College and has worked at several nurseries in Manitoba. He reports that the venerable Patmore business has opened the 2007 growing season with a strong performance.

# Happy 125<sup>th</sup> Brandon!



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BRANDON • SUN

### IN THE YEAR ... 1892

Work on Brandon's waterworks program, scheduled for an early springtime start, was to begin on Rosser Avenue near 18th Street, then south to Lorne Avenue and east as far as Fourth Street, with mains running north and south along principal thoroughfares. A pumping plant would be located at 26th Street, the estimated costs were \$125,000. Proceedings, however, did not get underway until the beginning of June.

However, there was still frost in the ground, and there was a general shortage of labourers.

A summer strike failed to obtain higher wages for the workers, and deadline after deadline passed for the building of a pumping station. Over winter, the project was suspended. Eventually, the water system opened its taps on Tuesday, Sept. 12, 1893.

Perhaps the pumping station was too well-constructed: pipes broke in two places the next day, flooding streets with water.

### IN THE YEAR ... 1927

Interest in the national birthday — Canada would be turning 50 this year — generally accelerated as commemorative medals bearing coat-of-arms on one side and images of Queen Victoria and King George V on the other arrived for distribution among 3,800 school children.

Founding Fathers were accorded honour by having Canadian National railway sleeping cars connected with the Brandon-served 'Confederation' train named after them; and special postage stamps in several denominations became souvenir items.

Advocates were beginning to grow enthusiastic about a national park development some 70 miles to the north ("much greater the accommodation and recreational possibilities than could be found at Lake Clementi, Oak Lake or Ninette").

However, not very many people were happy about the Exhibition Board's plan to take over all land between 10th and 13th streets, from Queens to Richmond avenues. Why? It was needed for future automobile parking — with camping alongside.



Proud to have grown along with Brandon!



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# Celebrations in Westman

## MANY COMMUNITIES ARE MARKING SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

BY DARCI CLARK

Webster's defines a smorgasbord as a 'buffet consisting of many foods'.

Thus when I was called upon to compile a special 125 menu, smorg-style was the best way to serve up the variety of who, what/where/when/ why-and-how of what's on tap around Westman.

For cover-your-bacon and brevity's sake, please note that our participating 'restaurant' list is only as inclusive as the Internet.

Furthermore, our 125-food feature stipulates upfront that traditional fare such as parades, beer gardens, cemetery and school tours, souvenirs, fire-works, non-denom church services and, of course, celebratory chow is common to almost all.

Our smorg spotlight will instead shine specifically on what the Café considers each community's 125 cultural catches-of-the-day.

And it's okay to look at the whole menu as long as you eat at Homecoming...

**Where:** Virden.  
**AKA:** Oil Capital of Manitoba.  
**When:** June 29 – July 1.  
**Contact Who/How:** Glen McKinnon 748-3872  
**What:** Trevor Hurst (on 29th), Ron Paley (on 30th) and their respective bands, as profiled in previous columns.  
**Why?** Heloooo! How often can a small Manitoba town boast back-to-back shows with prodigal sons from its immediate proximity who have literally

been to the Big Apple and back?

Both Hurst and Paley have been live from New York's Madison Square Garden, and it doesn't get bigger than that!

\*\*\*\*  
**Where:** Carberry and R.M. of North Cypress.  
**AKA:** King Spud Country.  
**Slogan:** Your Road to Family, Friends and Home.  
**When:** July 4 – 8.  
**Contact Who/How:** Shauna McKinnon 834-6616; Stu Olmstead 834-3193; townofcarberry.ca.

**What:** Horse and Carriage Shuttle Service; Tommy Douglas impersonation on Saturday, July 7 at 8 p.m.

**Why?** Carberry has gone to great lengths to preserve its heritage buildings and movie-ready mainstreet, so horse and carriage shuttles are the perfect promotion.

It also means professional impersonator John Nolan has access to the Greatest Canadian prop — the same Presbyterian pulpit that helped launch Tommy Douglas and bless his 56-year union to local gal and fellow Brandon College student, Irma Dempsey.

Thanks to a grant by the Manitoba Arts Council, tickets for this 125 catch-of-the-day are only \$10 and are available at the North Cypress Library and the East End Service Station.  
(And the concurrent Ag Society Fair and Rodeo ain't small potatoes either.)

\*\*\*\*  
**Where:** Killarney (100th) and R.M. of Turtle Mountain

(125).

**Slogan:** Honouring the Past, Celebrating the Present, Focusing on the Future!

**When:** July 5 – 8.  
**Contact Who/How:** Lee Bartley 523-0247; www.killarneymanitoba.com/celebration2007.htm

**What:** Trick Water-skiing by Club de Skinautique (July 8 @ 1 p.m.); including Holmfield and Ninga as part of their 125 family.

**Why?** If you got a lake flaunt it, and trick water-skiing is definitely hanging one's assets out for all to see. And in a day and age when bigger communities increasingly cannibalize smaller neighbours, it's refreshing that Killarney and Co. are going the extra miles to connect their celebrations with those in Holmfield and Ninga (120 years) via wagon caravan.

Holmfield gets an honourable mention for its 'guess where the lawn tractors runs out of gas' contest and Ninga a nod for promoting its Metis heritage.

And another hats off to these powers-that-be for their tourism savvy in incorporating the Fly Wheel Club's annual Prairie Pioneer Days.

\*\*\*\*  
**Where:** Griswold  
**When:** July 7 & 8  
**Contact Who/How:** Doreen Schmidt 855-2169; Agnes Moir 855-2104; griswold.cimnet.ca  
**What:** Everything  
**Why?** With a population of just 30 people, give or take, it doesn't take a mathematical savant to figure out how many of 'em and their dogs have had to

pitch in to pull off their big show.

Throw in an antique tractor pull and a bonfire and wiener roast, and its good old-fashioned fun at its grassroots best.

\*\*\*\*  
**Where:** Hamiota (100th).  
**Slogan:** Leaders in Community Innovation.  
**When:** July 18 – 22.  
**Contact Who/How:** Vicki and Ken Smith 764-2552; www.hamiota.com/100.html

**What:** Heritage theme; Red Coats of the North; Beard-Growing Contest; Hospital tours

**Why?** A young'un at only 100 years, Hamiota has also been a collective Café guest in recent weeks and we can hardly say more about their community commitment to heritage preservation, while at the same time paying homage to today through their homegrown Amazing Race.

The beard battle makes our list because as far as we know, Hamiota is the only hair-raiser and we respect how on the ball they had to be to book the much-in-demand Red Coats.

And thanks to the good Drs. Hudson, Hamiota is on the national map for its proactive approach to health care, and we surely need a good healthy story these days.

\*\*\*\*  
**Where:** Oak Lake (100th) and R.M. of Sifton (125th).  
**When:** July 19 – 22.  
**Contact Who/How:** Wendy Hunt 855-2822; Pete Masson 855-2328; oaklakeandarea.com  
**What:** Turkey/Ham Bingo (19th); Hole in One (20th &

21st); Lawn Mower Races (20th)

**Why?** How else are we gonna find out if turkeys and hams make good dabbers?

Our researchers also don't recall any other 125 Hole-In-One events, so that makes the must-do list. And the lawn mower races get a mention for uniqueness and to challenge the purists with self-propelled scythes to sign up.

\*\*\*\*  
**Where:** Elkhorn  
**Slogan:** "If you're not in Elkhorn for the 125th what will you tell your grandchildren?"  
**When:** August 3 – 5  
**Contact Who/How:** Garth Towler 748-2651; Jackie (Mallet) Holmberg 748-6865; elkhorn.mb.ca

**What:** Proactive Registration; Slogan and Logo; Legacy Projects

**Why?** The organizing trio of Kevin Tuthill, Towler and Holmberg were also Café guests not that long ago, with the topic of the day being how Jackie tracked down former residents with more ruthlessness than Dog the Bounty Hunter on his best day.

That guest appearance also acknowledged their guilt-inducing slogan and likewise appropriate celebratory logo.

But what got overlooked by our word count wizard then were Elkhorn's two homecoming projects — family sponsorships of replica lampposts and similarly sponsored bricks in the community wall — to both beautify main street and leave a named legacy for generations to come.

And I admire the hoop-jumping done to receive congratulatory messages from Gov. Gen.Michaëlle Jean and our own Lt.-Gov. John Harvard, who also proves he actually knows something about this little community that can.

\*\*\*\*  
**Where:** Gladstone.  
**AKA:** Happy Rock.  
**When:** August 8-12.  
**Contact Who/How:** Town of Gladstone 385-2332; www.town.gladstone.mb.ca.

**What:** 125 Home Identification Kits (\$20); Busk Stops; Free Internet Access.

**Why?** The Home Identification Kits are a nice one-two touch in that they are souvenirs both unique and uniquely useful to guide all the guest kin coming to town.

I also liked the clever word play re their 'The Busk Stops Here' talent show on the street. And it's just plain nice that seniors and shut-ins are virtually included via free Internet access sites at the Seniors Drop-In.

Kudos also for multiplying the communal traffic effect by coordinating 125 celebrations with the annual Fair and Rodeo.

\*\*\*\*  
And just one last cherry-pickin' 125 thang ... don't forget to try Brandon's own birthday beer, Assiniboine 1882.

It's made by Big Rock, one of the very few Canadian-owned breweries, and they named it just for you.

IN THE YEAR ... 1897

“Jubilee Year” brought its changes to the Brandon scene: a butter-making factory was established on a summer schedule under the name Brandon Creamery; a summer fair circuit embraced Portage la Prairie and Carberry; and a two storey block was constructed at Ninth Street and Rosser Avenue for Johnson & Co. Hardware as well as the YMCA headquarters overhead.

IN THE YEAR ... 1902

Firemen responded to a mid-day blaze in “The Sun” composing room where a typesetting machine gasoline attachment exploded with window-shattering results — and an abbreviated edition.

IN THE YEAR ... 1907

A new era began for Brandon householders with the introduction of a mail delivery service on Tuesday, Nov. 26, when, the record reads, “six heavily-loaded postmen started from the post office for their different postal sections. Three minutes later, at 8:03 a.m., Herbert

IN THE YEAR ... 1912

A public inspection of Brandon's new fire hall thrilled onlookers as Chief Melhuish put his forces through their paces with simulated alarms.

Erickson delivered the first letter to Rosser Avenue jeweller J.F. Higginbotham.”

A night-time display followed, when men feigned sleep in their darkened overhead quarters: “A deafening clang of bells had scarcely penetrated onlooker-consciousness before brigade members, fully dressed, were sliding down the poles to already-waiting horse-drawn equipment.”

Then, on Jan. 31, the Central Hall was formally opened with a banquet attended by 200 persons.

First wire dispatches concerning the Titanic tragedy were meagre — but enough to tell that more than 1,300 people had perished in the early morning of April 15. Brandon's Robert Fortune waited in vain for word that a brother's family of six were among the hundreds rescued.

For two hours on Oct. 23, Brandonites forgot all else in order to welcome HRH the Duke of Connaught, the Duchess and Princess Patricia. Surrounded by mounted escort, carriages containing the royal guests proceeded along flag draped streets from the Canadian Pacific depot to City Hall.

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SCIENCE  
MATH  
HISTORY

HOMEcoming WEEKEND

WE CELEBRATE THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF BRANDON



# Dwindling Ridership Couldn't Support Streetcar Service in the City — It Was Scrapped in '32

... FROM 'RAILS'  
ON PAGE THIRTEEN

Now, while street cars were a serious matter of contention over 20 years, no one appears to have challenged the need for a civic transportation system. In fact, this is a basic service. If your community is going to thrive as a regional marketplace, it is imperative that members of your workforce be able to get to their factories, shops, and offices. The duration and severity of prairie winters adds a touch of urgency. But councillors who must vote in favour of providing that service can never forget that unforgettable matter of the balanced budget.

Even while street cars were a serious matter for discussion, there was one basic decision which had to be made: public service versus private ownership.

Well, they solved that one in favour of public ownership and then went to work on competing bids, of which there were several.

The first was from the Brandon-Kensington Land and Development Co. Once specifics were provided, 10 miles of track were laid at a cost of \$200,000. Service would be provided between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. A 10-minute service was promised. There is no record of discussion on this proposal which eventually was abandoned.

In 1910, two more proposals were received. One was from a Vancouver firm and the second — never identified — was local. Both were rejected on the grounds of unsatisfactory conditions.

A year later, a syndicate associated with the Manitoba Power Co. made application to the Legislature for incorporation

under the name of Brandon Electric Railway.

With the private versus public ownership matter still unsettled, council in 1910 made a bold decision: they hired a man named Farquharson to study the local public-transportation needs. He reported that the rails could be laid for a cost of \$140,000, a figure which did not include overhead wiring, rolling stock, storage garage, plus a few extras.

Council apparently liked this report and then debated the possible benefits of combining the street-railway construction with the paving of the streets.

All of this careful preparation went into the trash can that autumn when council ordered a referendum on the type of ownership. There was only a small turnout at the polls, but they were decisive in voting for private ownership: 458 to 176.

The response from investors was immediate. One of the new proposals came from a popular community activist, J.D. McGregor, who represented a British syndicate. Council favoured the McGregor proposal and ordered a referendum to be submitted to the electorate. It passed. Conditions were established: McGregor was to have five miles of line installed before freeze-up. The steel was to be 70-pound standard gauge T-rail, and the franchise was to purchase at cost the two miles of rail the city had laid by that time. The franchise was given a 30-year contract with many conditions attached regarding ownership if the franchise ceased to function.,

Now, please don't think this matter was settled. When the opposition to private ownership

became so vocal, councillors had no choice but to put it to the acid test: the electorate. Another plebiscite was held and the voters opted for public ownership, and at the same time approved a \$300,000 budget item for street improvements.

City engineer Speakman sprang into action, and it soon showed. He arranged to have CPR lend an executive named Dave Heatley to Brandon to assume the role of master track-layer. A mixed crew of Poles and Galicians was recruited for the heavy labour. The crew for the overhead wiring came from the States.

The files on Brandon Electric Railway call for some explanations which are strangely absent. ITEM: The trackwork for the new facility was completed in November, but not until January did anyone order some streetcars, and the first three arrived in May of 1913. After a few trial runs, regular service began on two of the three runs on June, 1913.

While certainly there were some startup problems, there also was a little news of the wholesome variety. No one in town would have guessed that the brand-new City of Brandon, miles from everything on the agricultural frontier, would produce from its small population so many electric-railway motor-men and conductors from within its small population. These men needed no training and went right to work when hired.

As often happens with something new and exciting, there was a blush of enthusiasm in August, the first full month of service. The number of passengers was 2,776. Even when this number fell to 2,500, council was so enthused they purchased

10 single-truck open-air cars for use during the week of the summer fair. In fact, the fair-week experience was positive; each street car could pull up to three of the open coaches. There was council discussion of extending the line four miles in order to provide service to the Experimental Farm, Lake Percy, and the Indian Residential School. None of these extensions ever came to pass.

The advent of winter brought a need that had not been foreseen: street cars require stoves. They were installed.

The original plan of two-man crews had to be scrapped; there wasn't enough revenue. One-man cars demanded new rules for paying your fare. Originally, you paid as you entered. This took too long in busy periods so it was changed to pay as you left. (This was the rule in Halifax during the Second World War, but that's another story.)

I cannot recall ever having had a ride on a Brandon street car. Not only was there the matter of the fare, but in those days every one of us was so accustomed to walking that we just kept on using "Shank's Mare."

I have only one brief recollection of street cars. One Saturday afternoon, in the deep of winter, I was on Victoria Avenue with a bunch of chums, when we saw a street car approaching. There being fresh snow, it was using that huge brush which rotated on its head end. Being kids, we hurried out to stand on the boulevard and be decorated by the mini-blizzard put up by the whirling track cleaner.

Modern-day ratepayers of Brandon should offer a word of praise for the early councillors who strove to make this facility

pay its way.

They tinkered non-stop with schedule and fares in an attempt to find the perfect combination. It proved to be elusive. In retrospect, they were simply ahead of their time; they were offering a service which demanded a larger population.

Mind you, that tinkering continued to the end. For example, in 1928. For the first time they offered Sunday service, no doubt in the hope that the church-goers would save the street cars. However, by this time it was obvious even to the most obvious supporter, that the street railway could not survive. With a little encouragement from the province, tenders were called for a bus service, and the successful bidder was MacArthur and Son in 1932.

But hold on! The street railway may have been in a terminal condition, but it wasn't about to expire. There was a strong hint that perhaps the province would take it over.

Enter the Yanks: a company named Iowa Southern Utilities Corporation entered the picture with a tentative offer, which only served to delay the ultimate decision. When council made its final decree, the street cars were losing \$800 a month, and council indicated it was prepared to subsidize the line to this extent, but this offer came too late.

Some of the readers of this account will be surprised to learn that parts of the rail line are still performing a useful service. A few of the rails were lifted and sawn into short lengths; they now serve as fence posts which you may see when you are driving on First Street North and follow the roadway around that bend in the Assiniboine.

They came from  
Brandon:  
Samuel Bronfman

Brandon gave birth to a billion-dollar liquor empire. Samuel Bronfman, the founder of what would become the world's largest distilling firm, Seagram Company Ltd., spent his early years in the Wheat City.

Bronfman was born in 1889 (or 1891 in Brandon) en route to Canada from Bessarabia, Russia. The Bronfmans, tobacco farmers in the old country, settled near Wapella, Sask., but it wasn't long before Ekiel Bronfman brought his wife and three sons to Brandon, where they started a wood-fuel delivery business.

In 1903, the family borrowed money to purchase a hotel in Emerson. The railway boom made the hotel business extremely profitable, and by World War One the family owned three hotels in Winnipeg. At war's end, the family started to get into the liquor business, smuggling liquor into the United States when that country imposed Prohibition and then selling it legally when the taps began to flow again in 1933.

During the next 30 years, the Bronfman's company — which adopted the Seagrams name after a corporate merger — became the largest liquor company in the world. In 1965, sales of popular whisky brands like Seven Crown and Seagram's VO, as well as sales of other bottled brands, reached the \$1 billion mark.

Bronfman died in Montreal in 1971.



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# Athletes Make Their Names Here

## RICH SPORTING HISTORY MAKES BRANDON PROUD

BY KEITH BORKOWSKY

When Brandon was founded 125 years ago, it's sporting culture likely wasn't all that strong.

But it didn't take long before the Wheat City became known for sport as much as agriculture and commerce.

Hockey teams from the Wheat City, first the Native Sons and later carried the Wheat Kings name with pride. Brandon Wheat Kings hockey fans followed a Stanley Cup challenge series with interest in March 1904. The Wheat Kings battled the then six-time defending champion Ottawa Silver Seven, but lost 6-3 and 9-3. That series raised the bar to a level never reached again, but not through a lack of effort.

As far as the junior ranks, no team reached the heights of the 1979 Wheat Kings, recently inducted into the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame. Aside from a 29-game unbeaten streak, the Wheaties under coach Dunc McCallum set Western Hockey League records for most points (125), fewest losses (5), and longest unbeaten streak (29). A 2-1 Memorial Cup Final overtime loss to the Peterborough Petes left the Wheat Kings with their lone regret on the year. Ten players were drafted in that famed can't-miss NHL Entry Draft of 1979, with the top line of Laurie Boschman, Brian Propp, and Ray Allison going in the first round.

Brandon made it back to the Memorial Cup in 1996 as the Western Hockey League champs, with Wade Redden and Peter Schaefer leading the way. Both moved on to successful NHL careers, but like their 1978-79 brethren, were eliminated by the Peterborough Petes in a 4-3 semifinal loss.

The 1949 Wheat Kings also made Memorial Cup history books for losing a best-of-seven series in eight games. The extra game was required when a 3-3 tie in Game 3 could not be settled in overtime. In Game 8, the Wheaties had a 4-2 lead in the third period and could not close the deal. They lost to the Montreal Royals 6-4 and gave La Belle Province its first ever Memorial Cup win.

Brandon's had an NHL presence dating back to famed

Toronto Maple Leafs goalie Walter Edward (Turk) Broda, one of only 13 Leafs to have an "honoured number" and the only Leaf to win two solo Vezina Trophies as the NHL's top goalie. Broda was the first in a long list of top goaltenders that included the likes of Glen Hanlon, now head coach of the Washington Capitals, and Ron Hextall.

Bill Derlago, who graduated from the Wheat Kings just prior to their 1979 miraculous run, played 12 NHL seasons and scored 416 points, primarily as Rick Vaive's teammate on the Toronto Maple Leafs and Vancouver Canucks, while Ray Ferraro thrilled Wheat King fans with a brilliant 108-goal season in 1983-84, a WHL record that still stands.

Bill Fairbairn, formed one of the top junior hockey lines with Juha Widing and nearly won the NHL's top rookie prize, the Calder Trophy with the New York Rangers. In 1972, he played in the Stanley Cup Finals, losing to the Boston Bruins and another fellow Westman star, Dallas Smith.

Hextall, a firebrand goaltender, was also known for his ability to score goals himself. The former Wheat King could also stop the puck and won the Stanley Cup playoffs MVP honour, the Conn Smythe Trophy in 1987, even though his Flyers lost the final in seven games to the Edmonton Oilers. His grandfather, Bryan Sr. also had a lengthy NHL career with the New York Rangers in the 1940s.

Over on the campus scene, Brandon University's athletics programs produced some of the top basketball programs in Canadian history in the 1980s, with three-consecutive national men's championship wins. The streak opened with the 1987 title game where BU beat the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds 74-66. John Carson, one of the all-time Bobcat greats, scored 39 points in that match, and was named MVP.

The following year, the Bobcats sent the Acadia Axemen home 81-66 losers in the title game. Whitney Dabney brought home one more MVP trophy to Brandon. The Victoria Vikes came the closest to knock-

ing off BU in 1989, but the Bobcats prevailed 74-73. This time, Joey Vickery stepped up and drove the Bobcats into victory lane. Victoria prevented a fourth championship in 1990 when they beat the Bobcats 93-85 in the quarters. Vickery, a former Canadian national team member, came within a single basket of the CIS single-game scoring record when he netted 42 points in the 1990 national consolation final. The Bobcats earned one more championship in 1996 when they beat the Alberta Golden Bears 79-72. Keith Vassell earned MVP honours in that championship.

Throughout those years, legendary Jerry Hemmings coached the Bobcats to 16 consecutive national championship appearances and 21 overall, which included 13 final fours. From 1975-76 to 2003-04, Hemmings racked up 734 wins. He was named BU coach emeritus in 2006.

On the ice, the BU Bobcats men's hockey club reached an elite status under coach Andy Murray, now a St. Louis Blues bench boss. Murray coached the BU side from 1978-1981 and in his final season in Brandon, led the Bobcats to the No. 1 ranking in the CIAU. Over the years, the hockey Bobcats made the CIAU national championship tournament five times from 1974-15 to 1982-83, but never won a game there in nine tries. The program was shut down because of a lack of funds in 2002.

Brandon's curling history includes numerous provincial champions from the Wheat City Curling Club or Brandon Curling Club.

Brandon hosted the 1993 Scott Tournament of Hearts and gave hometown fans something to talk about. A Maureen Bonar-skipped rink of Lois Fowler, Allyson Bell and Rhonda Fowler went on a 9-4 tear (8-3 in the round robin) that was only stopped in the final by Saskatchewan's Sandra Schmirler, who won the now famous game 7-6 in an extra end.

Schmirler gave Brandonites another impressive show with one of the most famous women's curling shots in history in a 9-6 win over Shannon Kleibrink at the 1997 Olympic

Curling Trials at the Keystone Centre that sent her to the 1998 Winter Olympic Games.

Throughout Brandon's recent curling history, one family gets named frequently: Fowler. Brian Fowler and wife Lois both wore the Buffalo Patch on their backs in national competitions and Lois almost won a Canadian title with sister Rhonda. The next generation is already in the competitive ranks with Rob making it to the Brier in 2007 with Jeff Stoughton's Winnipeg-based rink.

Golf, a favoured summer pastime of curlers and winter athletes alike, brings many top players to the area for the annual Grey Owl and Tamarack championships. But some top players were already here. Dan Halldorson, a one-time employee at the Wheat City Golf Course, rose the playing ranks to reach and win events on the PGA Tour. Halldorson also competed for Canada and won two World Cups in 1980 and 1985 with Jim Nelford and Dave Barr. Halldorson remains involved with professional gold as deputy director of the Canadian Tour.

On the track, Brandon has produced an Olympic medallist in long distance runner Angela Chalmers, who also won two gold medals in the Commonwealth Games, while

gymnast Jenna Kerbis earned a bronze medal while competing for Canada's team in the 1996 Commonwealth Games.

On the baseball diamonds, the legendary Brandon Greys won the 1949 Manitoba Senior Baseball crown, sporting an overall record of 87-18-3 and in 1950 won the Mandak League crown. Greys batsmen even faced off against Negro League and Major League star Satchel Paige in a 4-3 loss to the Minot Mallards. The Hall of Famer threw three innings against the Greys, striking out seven and allowing only one hit.

But the Wheat City's baseball history goes back even further than that, back to Brandon-born Russell Ford, who threw one out short of 300 innings in 1910 for the American League's New York Highlanders, the team now known as the New York Yankees. In his rookie season, Ford sported a 26-6 record with a 1.65 ERA and helped the Highlanders to an 86-63 second-place record. He had two 20-plus win seasons in his five-year professional career with the Highlanders and the Federal League's Buffalo Buffeds.

For the most part, the Manitoba Senior Baseball League gave Brandon ball fans at Kinsmen Stadium and later, Westbran Stadium (now Andrews Field) their diamond

entertainment. In recent years, 1991 and 1994, Brandon also hosted two successful World Youth Baseball Championships. Canadian Senior Men's Baseball Championship came to Brandon in 2006 and will return in 2008.

Not to be outdone, some of Brandon's gridiron greats made the big leagues. Glenn Harper, Craig and Scott Hendrickson all had lengthy CFL careers, with Craig winning a Grey Cup with the B.C. Lions in 2000.

The latest Brandonite to reach the CFL is Chris Bauman, the first-overall pick in the 2007 CFL Canadian Draft by the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. Bauman played a significant role with the Regina Rams in the CIS and is expected to make an impact in his rookie season.

Bauman likely looked up to another fellow Brandonite and Vincent Massey grad, Israel Idonije. The four-year NFL veteran, the last three seasons with the Chicago Bears, played a significant role in Bears' defence with 40 career tackles and a pair of sacks. Last season, he became the only Brandonite to have ever played in a Super Bowl. The Indianapolis Colts kept a ring off Idonije's finger when they beat the Bears 29-17 in Super Bowl XLI in Miami, Fla.

kborkowsky@brandonsun.com

## Prognosticators May Have Spoken Too Soon

From: "Competitive Sports Dead in Brandon?" printed on the front page of the Brandon Sun on Oct. 3, 1957.

"Junior high school and collegiate students in Brandon are displaying virtually no interest in competitive sports," Carl Bjarnason, superintendent of schools, Wednesday night told a meeting of the School Health Committee.

"Every youth should take part in at least one competitive sport," Mr. Bjarnason said, "but there seems to be no way of getting them interested. We seem to be becoming a race of spectators."

The problem of active participation is more difficult among boys than girls, Peter Dobson, physical director for city schools,

told the committee. "If you can convince the students to forsake their television sets and the coffee shops and take part in competitive sports, invariably they enjoy it. But the difficulty lies in convincing them of this fact."

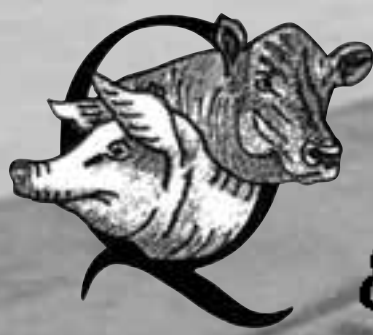
Committee members discussed various sports and a variety of possible ways of stirring interest among the older students. The problem does not exist at the elementary school levels where the pupils greet the school hockey program and other competitive sports with remarkable enthusiasm.

School Principal W. J. Peted pointed out that the students

apparently lose this enthusiasm because of other interests when they move into the junior high schools. "There also seems to an attitude that 'John Doe can run faster than I, so I won't bother running' and I don't know how we can combat it."

The necessity for such participation was stressed by Dr. M. Kozakiewicz, city health officer, who reported that the children in Brandon on the whole are very fit but that they lack sufficient exercise. "This can be detected by the way they walk," he said.

A possible solution to the problem may be provided by physical fitness clinics, currently under consideration by the committee.

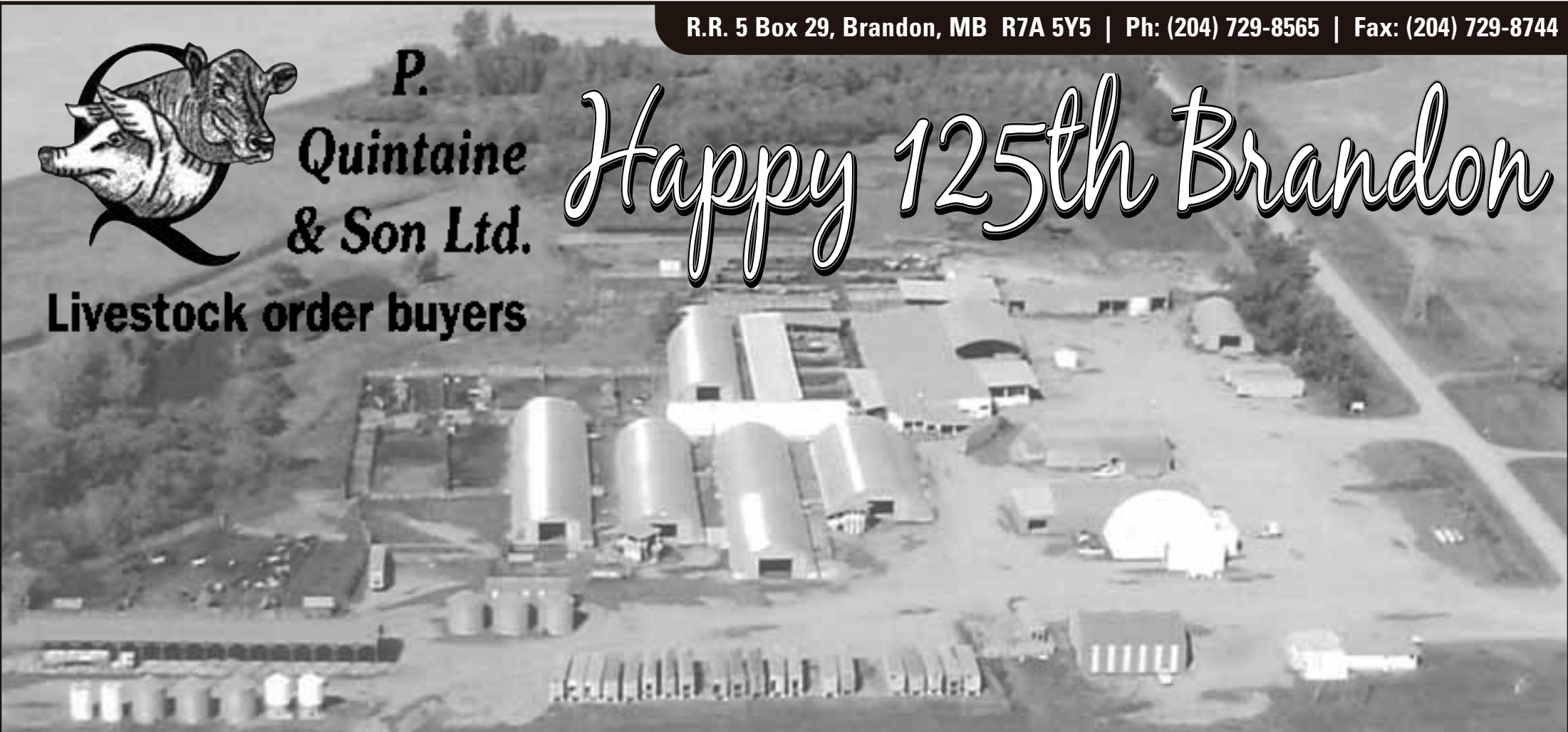


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# Better Roads Seduced Pedestrians

## Mingling On The Sidewalks Set Those Cash Registers Jingling

... FROM 'DOWNTOWN'  
ON PAGE THIRTEEN

From 10th Street right down to Yaeger's on Sixth, there were cash registers waiting for your money.

Just one of the big surprises was the foot traffic. Sidewalks were as thronged as the midway at the summer fair. If visitors to the downtown were not walking, then they were sitting in their cars watching the passing parade. This was the night to see, or be seen.

The major magnet was Eaton's, which in those days fea-

tured what it called a Foodateria on its Seventh-Street side. I often thought, in later years, that the next time I saw Cliff Butler, a life-long Eatonian, I would ask him if he and the crew were paid for overtime, or did they just get time off in lieu. I'm sorry that I never asked him that question. By my calculation, most retailers were involved in a 13-hour day. Think about this long enough and it will make your arches ache.

In the Westman towns, Saturday night had a double purpose for farm and ranch families: Yes, they could buy a week's

groceries, but it was also one of the few opportunities to visit with friends and neighbours. The farmer who wanted to borrow a set of harrows, or who wanted some local information on planting plans and preferences, could always find someone who had the answers.

Many of those strollers on Rosser Avenue were eating ice-cream cones, sold from a converted Model T on a side street. The vendor was known by his nickname, "Johnny-lick-the-spoon."

This may not sound like a special treat by today's stan-

dards, but it was significant. It was a display of the new conveniences, like mechanical refrigeration, which followed the advent of hydro power.

On an irregular basis, the brass band of the local Salvation Army congregation would put on a concert at the corner of Tenth and Rosser. They would play a number of tunes, after which the leader would offer a brief sermon. Female members of this church, wearing their distinctive bonnets, would pass through the crowd holding tambourines in which you could deposit your contribution.

Citizens standing on street corners, chatting with friends, had no shortage of current topics, for like the rest of Canada,

Brandon and Westman were caught up in a fever of change.

The research on cars and trucks which was performed during the war in France had provided many families with new motive power on wheels. Tractors were sending teams with names like Duke and Dobbin out to their final pasture. Every family just had to have a Philco or Atwater-Kent radio. To hear those "voices from afar."


I have never seen any documentation on this, but I can give you a guess that it was a combination of good roads and better vehicles that brought an end to the good-spirited excitement of Saturday Night Shopping. And that's a pity.

### IN THE YEAR 1917

The city's first automobile fatality took place at 11th Street and Rosser Avenue, when a car driven by Basswood farmer William Girling accidentally struck and killed a elderly Summer Fair visitor from Saskatchewan.

However, quiet settled around the Brandon telephone exchange on New Year's Eve: the "hello girl" era was giving way to automation — a first in Manitoba. Soon after 5 a.m. on Jan 1, 1918, the transition began; 13 minutes later, manual switchboards had become local history.

# Happy 125th Birthday Brandon!



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As Mayor and on behalf of City Council, I would like to congratulate Brandon on its 125th Birthday! Since its incorporation as a city on May 30th, 1882, this once small prairie city has seen continued growth and success. We, as citizens, are proud to live freely in such a beautiful and progressive city. Visitors coming to Brandon for the first time are often surprised by the amenities they discover here. Please join the fun during this celebration year by participating in the many events planned during Homecoming Weekend from June 29th to July 1st. What an excellent opportunity to meet up with old friends!

**HAPPY 125th  
BIRTHDAY,  
BRANDON!**

Mayor Dave Burgess  
and City Councillors





# Every Decade Had Its Style And a Store To Find It In

## Stay Stylish, Brandon: From Knickers to Multiple Piercings, We Have Faithfully Followed Trends Throughout The Years

BY JOANNE F. VILLENEUVE

Like the rest of Canada, style throughout Brandon's 125 years has varied and changed along the way.

When settlers arrived to this area, some brought with them the fashions of the day from eastern Canada, though most wore sensible, sturdy working clothes.

A few, more privileged individuals followed the norms set out by Queen Victoria.

Corsets, bustles, plumed hats were the rage for women, while men donned bowler or boater hats, frock coats, trousers, Ascot ties and waistcoats.

During this period, children's wear was also directed by the trend of the day — no belly shirts for circa 1882 girls!

They wore pinafores for play and work, while Sunday best comprised of dresses with sashes.

Kid leather gloves or muffs were used in cooler weather, along with knee-length button-up boots and long, flared wool coats.

Unlike today's boys' fashions, jeans that displayed underwear were not deemed worthy of being worn by even the poorest of workers.

In fact, boys wore knee-length breeches and round-collared shirts, topped with jackets.

In its first years, Brandon had no clothing shops, but Coombs and Stewart on Rosser Avenue sold dry goods, otherwise known as fabric, which was then fashioned into

dresses, trousers, shirts and other items in keeping with the era.

Four years after its inception, Brandon boasted at least two actual clothing stores — The Golden Lion and Beaver Hall.

### Early Fashion Evolved

As the Victorian era eased into the 20th century and the Edwardian era, clothing and fashion evolved alongside.

In 1906, another clothing shop, Doig and Robertson's offered fur coats for a mere \$29.50 and silk for \$0.59 yard.

During this period, hats for women and girls were broad-brimmed affairs, resplendent with ostrich feathers or miniature flower gardens, while several styles of casual hats for men were very much in vogue.

While more streamlined tea gowns became the norm, corsets were no longer essential in a woman's wardrobe.

Girls' dress lengths were between the knees and the ankles, higher than ever before, and were embellished with ruffles, inserts of lace, pin tucks and ruffling.

Men wore blazers, along with breeches and leather gaiters, for outdoor endeavours.

As the new century moved forward, clothing trends continued to evolve.

In the 1920s, there were dramatic changes in fashions, especially for women.

Ankles, which had previously never been shown in polite company, were now being highlight-

ed by calf-grazing straight-cut flapper skirts, while beaded headdresses and cloche hats were the accessories of choice.

One piece swimsuits — though nothing like the flesh-revealing bikinis of today — were introduced.

As for men, knicker and breeches became outmoded, and tapered suits were preferred.

To purchase such finery, the place to go in Brandon of those days was John A. McDonald and Son Clothiers, a shop for the well-heeled man, located on Rosser Avenue.

Downtown Brandon was very different in those days, as most of the fashion shops were located on Rosser and 10th Street, which eventually became the city's fashion district.

### Wartime changed everything

During the Second World War, Brandonites wore more practical clothing — simply cut outfits for women and zoot suits for men — reflecting the times.

Shoppers of this era could visit Doig's, Atkinson's Ltd, Miladi's, The Vogue or Bond Clothes Shop, the latter of which boasted in a 1946 ad that they served with "Real old pre-war courtesy" and where a man could buy a leather jacket for \$14.95.

A post-war celebration in the '50s was felt in fashion, translating into form-fitting bodices, calf- and knee-length skirts, stiletto-heeled pointed toe shoes, long gloves and beret-style hats.

It was during this era that women started showing off more leg than ever before and shorts became the summer wardrobe's staple.

At this point, there were many more shops where the latest clothing and accessories could be purchased including Chrest Shoes, Shavers' Furs, Houssian Bros' Furs, The Sportswear Shop, Barry Neill Men's Wear and T. Eaton's Co or Eaton's as it later became known.

### Psychedelica

In the 1960s, fashions were all over the map

In its infancy, the decade began modestly, carrying over the styles of the '50s.

Straight skirts with inverted pleat accents and low yoke skirts were accessorized with shell tops, while pencil skirts were paired with sweaters or cardigans — all very proper.

But by 1966, the mini skirt, designed by Mary Quant, not only set a new trend which by the following year was de rigueur just about everywhere in the world, but it opened the door to even more innovation and more daring, boundary-pushing fashion.

In the latter part of the decade, geometric hairstyles and bouffants were as much the norm as shaggy, long hair preferred by the hippie set.

Staid solid colours or uniform patterns in fabric were replaced by psychedelic, wildly coloured motifs worn by women and men.

Clothing reflected these choices and became a means to express one's individuality, one's work, one's beliefs.

At about this time, pantyhose took the place of stockings.

Such a wardrobe staple could have been purchased in Brandon

at K-Mart, Brandon Consumers Co-op or Woolco, which sold affordable clothing, while shops like JoAnn Shop catered to more refined tastes.

Disco fever hit in the mid-1970s and leisure suits made of polyester and other synthetic cloth and platform shoes were popular for men.

Women gravitated to sequined or brightly coloured "boob tubes" and stretch catsuits — with Farrah Fawcett hair — as well as bell-bottomed or elephant jeans and cords, tight fitting t-shirts, wide-legged gauchos and flowing caftans.

### Individual style

Big hair and padded shoulders became the symbol of the 80s. Fashion no longer followed a code.

With the singer Madonna's ascent to stardom, lingerie worn as outerwear was just one of the trends in fashion.

Large crosses on chains, multiple ear piercings and other garish accessories were popular with young women.

Some career-driven men invested in power suits, displaying their money-making potential, but others, who wanted to look with the times, took to wearing earrings. Swatch was the watch of the day.

These are just some of the trends. Looks ranged from the new romantic to the androgynous to the valley girl to the dancewear to the Miami Vice to the Thriller to the rap to the preppy to the heavy metal.

These influences filtered down to Brandon and could be purchased at dozens of stores and shops.

The Gallery (now the Town Centre) boasted shops like Suzy Shier and the Shoppers Mall also had several fashion shops like Cleo.

Men could shop at Tip Top, Narvey's, Jack Frasers and other specialty stores, while The Specialty Shop carried designer styles.

Still in existence today, Union Shoe Store, New System Store Stream 'n' Wood and other shopping destinations in Brandon were growing in the 1980s.

### More than grunge in '90s

The following decade saw few radical changes: stirrup pants were paired with oversized sweaters or T-shirt, jackets became longer and narrower matching the length of skirts, jeans were worn with blazers and classic white or blue shirts.

Some of the popular influences in the '90s included the Spice Girls, rap singers and hip hoppers, sports, skate boarders, and grunge music.


The result in clothing was lots of Lycra, cropped pants, mini skirts, and belly shirts alongside sixties or seventies retro looks as well as punk or goth get-ups.

Multiple piercings — not restricted to ears — low slung pants that displayed underwear, black clothing and brilliantly hued dyed hair were as popular as Tommy Hilfiger conservatively cut jeans, T-shirts and sweaters.

Until its demise in 1999, the Eaton store dominated the downtown retail scene, where clothing shops had gravitated for Brandon's early days until the advent of the mall.

Today, the parameters of fashion are boundless and the many shops in Brandon, most of them national chains, cater to Brandonites' varying tastes in clothing and accessories.


[jvilleneuve@brandonsun.com](mailto:jvilleneuve@brandonsun.com)



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# Crime And Vice Haven't Been Strangers

## Many Changes Over The Years For Those Who Patrolled Wheat City Streets

BY IAN HITCHEN

Retired Brandon police officer Les White recalls a time when officers walked the downtown beat instead of patrolling in police cars.

When he joined the force in the 1950s, its 13 or 14 officers didn't carry radios to call for backup — they relied on a flashlight, a .38-calibre revolver and trusty baton to keep order.

"We would go out at night and turn every door handle, walk the streets all night in the winter time," White recalled.

"It taught you to be very alert because you were all by yourself. If you ran into a problem you had to look after it yourself."

A lot has changed since then as the Brandon Police Service has evolved into a force of 78 officers.

Even more has changed since the Brandon City Police Force was founded on July 12, 1882, led at first by Chief Const. Archibald L. McMillan, who commanded constables Donald Campbell and John M. Keays.

### Houses of ill-repute

Former chief Richard Bruce has researched police history, including that of the Brandon force, which has a colourful past — to say the least.

The officers' main duties consisted of breaking up drunken fist-fights and raids on brothels.

"At one point of Brandon's history, these establishments out-numbered churches," Bruce notes.

One notorious madame, Miss Dandy French, shot a local businessman in the ear, apparently because he'd reported her to police.

Angry madames weren't the only danger as residents complained of constant danger as riders challenged each other to see whose horse could gallop faster.

McMillan's tenure as chief came to an abrupt end in 1885 when he accidentally shot himself while placing a rifle in a case in Smart's Hardware Store.

The rifle's butt hit the floor, fired, and sent a bullet through McMillan's body below the stomach. He died three hours later.

In 1912, city council dismissed Chief Const. Watson Boyd and his entire force — except for one officer — following an inquest into allegations that officers were negligent in their duties regarding gambling

and prostitution.

Suprisingly, Boyd's successor, E.G. "Edward" Berry, was considered too strict and was dismissed in 1913 after one year at his post.

The force stabilized when former Winnipeg City Police Sergeant H.B. "Harry" Everett became chief constable in 1923, a position he held until 1947, when he died due to poor health. It was the longest tenure in the history of the force.

### Cops had to watch the lights

When White joined in 1958, the force had one police car, a motorcycle and a paddy wagon.

It was a time before officers carried radios and they used phones in local businesses an hour's walk apart to keep in touch with the police station at the corner of Sixth Street and Princess Avenue.

"If you didn't phone in, then the sergeant and the boys would come looking for you," White said, adding that in an emergency officers would flag down passersby to call or go to the police station to get backup.

Officers also had to keep an eye on a series of red lights perched atop hydro and telephone poles as they walked along Rosser Avenue and Princess Avenue.

"If the office wanted you they'd throw the switch and the red light would come on and then you'd have to go and find a telephone to phone in," White said.

Break and enter was a primary concern back then, and officers would check the door handle of each business to ensure it was locked.

### CSI: Brandon

As administrative officer, White played a key role in introducing the force's own forensic identification section in 1969.

Cpl. Doug Bottley was the first trained full-time identification officer and remained with the section for 12 years.

Up to that point, an officer worked with RCMP to lift fingerprints from crime scenes.

"It was pretty limited," Bottley said of forensic techniques.

That started to change once the Brandon service had its own identification section with its own dark room to develop black-and-white photos of crime scenes and once it began to fingerprint suspects itself.

Photography and fingerprints

were the staples of investigation in Bottley's day.

Fingerprints would have to be mailed to RCMP in Ottawa and it would take two to three weeks to get a match.

Colour film was a big advance in the early 1970s as the ident section expanded to three officers.

### March of technology makes a big difference

Meanwhile, White said patrolling in cars became common in the 1970s and Bruce said officers stopped walking the beat full-time in January 1971. The force now has 25 vehicles.

Also in 1971, Brandon became the smallest community in North America to introduce the 999 system which evolved into 911, Bruce said.

Hand-held radios were introduced in the late 1960s to early 1970s, and armoured vests arrived in the late 1970s to mid-1980s.

Computers which could register owners of vehicles were introduced in the '80s.

The backgrounds of those who wore the uniforms also changed: White was the man who hired the force's first female officer, Carol Fisher, in 1979 and by the 1980s the force had hired its first aboriginal officer, Wilfred Bone.

The force changed its name to the Brandon City Police Department before it became known as the Brandon Police Service in the '90s.

The BPS is now a busy hive of units that handle a host of duties including traffic, bylaw, police service dog, criminal investigation, forensic identification, training, court and community policing.

Nowadays, Bottley would hardly recognize the BPS Forensic Identification Unit.

It's equipped with a searchable computer database which holds the name, address, photos and descriptions of convicts.

An Argon laser illuminates hairs, blood and body fluids, glass fragments and other evidence at a crime scene that can't be seen with the naked eye.

Dusted prints lifted at the crime scene can be scanned into a computer and transmitted to RCMP in Ottawa where they're matched in a computer database.

In February 2005, the BPS became the first municipal police force in Canada to join the RCMP's Police Reporting



ABOVE: Former police officer Les White reflects on the many firsts he helped issue into the Brandon Police Service during his long service with Brandon's force. BELOW LEFT: Ident officer Cpl. Doug Bottley takes an identification photo of Les White for the Brandon City Police in 1969. BELOW RIGHT: A new fingerprinting machine is demonstrated earlier this year.

and Occurrence System, a computer system that allows the BPS and Mounties to share case files and records.

It's also part of a Regional Automated Fingerprint Identification Access System fingerprint databank.

DNA testing, now available through RCMP labs, just wasn't an option in Bottley's time.

In April the BPS received a computer scanner that can capture fingerprints straight from the skin and e-mail the images to Ottawa to receive results within a couple of hours.

In June 2006, officers added Tasers to their arsenal and in October the BPS began to equip cars with digital video recorders.

The advance in technology, it seems, isn't going to end there as current police chief, Keith Atkinson, vows to introduce CompStat, otherwise known as CrimeStat, to Brandon.

The computer system would track specific types of crime and plot them on a map on a week-by-week basis.

That map may eventually be displayed to the public on the Internet.

In the end, though, the force's strength lies more in its people than its equipment, Bruce said.

"I think that the police service is hallmarked more by the staff and the people that go out every day and grind it out," Bruce said. "They do a good job for the community all the time."

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BY IAN HITCHEN

Police officers haven't just been writing speeding tickets in Brandon over the years — some of their duties have been more secretive.

According to Canadian Security Intelligence Service documents, during the 1930s Brandon RCMP officers or their informants spied on citizens believed to have ties to the Communist movement.

"It is interesting to see which groups in particular CSIS takes an abiding interest in," said Brandon University archivist and history teacher, Tom Mitchell, who obtained the files under the Access to Information Act about 10 years ago.

"You have private police, you have a municipal police force ... you've got secret police or security forces and Brandon's seen them all."

Mitchell began using CSIS files to research the career of Albert Edward Smith, a Brandon Methodist minister who left the church in 1919 and was a leading figure of the Communist movement until his death in 1947.

Mitchell explained it was the North West Mounted Police, and then its descendant the RCMP, which once investigated state security matters including "subversive" activities within Canada.

### Communists and Slavic people surveilled

A major focus of the force was the Communist Party of Canada that was founded in 1921. At times it was deemed

illegal during the 1920s and 1930s.

Mitchell said he understands the Mounties interest as the party's stated goal was the overthrow of the Canadian state.

"Every state has the right, a moral obligation, to defend itself," Mitchell said. "So a state has to gather information about potential threats to security."

Mitchell said one of the "fronts" for Communists in Brandon was the Unemployed Workers Council and two Brandon families in particular were widely known to be connected to the Communist movement.

CSIS would have inherited the files from the RCMP when it took over state security matters in the 1970s, Mitchell said.

From time to time, CSIS forwards documents to the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa, where they're not usually opened until a request is made.

Even then, CSIS screens the information to make sure its release doesn't violate the Access to Information Act or jeopardize sources.

Indeed, some of the Brandon files that are stamped "secret"

are censored but they show the RCMP kept tabs on the activities of the Brandon chapter of the Communist Party, Unemployed Workers Councils, Federation of Russian Canadians and Polish Democratic Association for years.

### Groups were not revolutionaries

In the case of the PDA, from the mid-1930s to mid-1960s

Mounties recorded recruitment efforts, meetings, socials, fundraising, literature and even the movies members watched — an April 15, 1956 report notes that an audience of 24 watched a screening of "The Country Doctor" hosted by the Brandon PDA.

"The activities of the above mentioned organization will be kept under observation as much as possible," noted a corporal with the Brandon RCMP special branch.

Another report expressed concern with a concert and meeting held in June, 1933.

"The meeting following the concert was of the usual Communistic propaganda type," notes the author.

The reports are similar for the files on the Brandon chapter of the Communist Party, Unemployed Workers Councils and Federation of Russian Canadians.

Mitchell said the RCMP would typically seek informants or plant agents in the labour movement or organizations they were curious about and the force's interest in Brandon groups was part of a nationwide surveillance effort.

Even though Communist ideology implies revolution, Mitchell said, members of the groups under surveillance were mainly concerned with improving working conditions.

"The idea that they were actually intent on some revolutionary enterprise is really nonsense," he said.

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## Crime Stats Tell Part Of The Story

It isn't just Brandon's police force which has changed over the years — the city and crime itself has altered according to force statistics.

Back in 1963, for example, the police department's annual report shows 33 officers patrolled 148 kilometres of street as they protected a population of 28,166.

In 2006, 74 officers served a population of 41,511.

Among the crimes listed in the 1963 Brandon police annual report that don't appear in modern editions is bigamy, buggery, abortion and keeping a bawdy house.

On the other hand, in 1963 drug offences are nowhere to be found but 84 were recorded in 2006.

The 1963 crime statistics are far more detailed in 1963 as the force meticulously kept a variety of stats on traffic collisions — causes, whether they were fatal or non-fatal, if they involved female or male drivers, occurred at night or day and the number of people hospitalized.

But, interestingly, the 1963 stats only note impaired drivers who caused an accident — seven of them that year.

Regardless of the greater population and size of the city

or any changes to methods of tracking statistics or definition of crimes, it's still interesting to compare 1963 figures for certain common offences to their 2006 counterparts.

Case in point — there were 363 break and enters recorded in the 2006 compared to the 104 in 1963.

There were 387 assaults in 2006 compared to 26 in 1963, 37 robberies in 2006 versus nine in 1963, and 80 vehicle thefts last year compared to 51 in '63.

All 51 autos reported stolen in 1963 were recovered.

/Brandon Sun

## Brandon Crimeline

A boomtown, Brandon grew up fast and not entirely innocent. From its earliest days, Brandon has had a dark side as these notable cases show.

**1888:** The first of four people executed in Brandon shoots his wife for berating him.

William Webb and his wife, Mary Jane Webb, left England and settled in Oak Lake before moving to Brandon in 1881 to start Pacific Laundry.

The couple and their four children lived in a small, one-storey

house near the corner of First Street and Rosser Avenue where they ran their business in a lean-to.

On Sept. 1, the Webbs were working and drinking most of the day. The pair quarrelled and Mrs. Webb left the lean-to to fetch some sheets from a clothesline, scolding her husband as she left.

Fed up, Webb grabbed a shot gun and loaded it with a shell. He put the gun down by the time his wife returned but picked it up again when he realized she was still taunting him.

He fired shot her without aiming, striking his wife in the jaw. Webb left his children to stand over their mother's body as he rushed to the police station, confessed and asked to be arrested.

He repeated his confession at trial and was hanged on Dec. 28.

— Charles Brawn, for the Brandon Sun

**1899:** Emily Hilda Blake becomes the only woman ever hanged in Manitoba.

On July 5, 1899 housemaid Hilda Blake shot her employer's pregnant wife, Mary Lane, in the back.

The only witness to the shooting, Blake claimed a tramp had come to the door asking for food and shot Lane when she refused.

Brandon Police Chief James Kirkcaldy wasn't fooled. Based on burn marks on the victim's dress, Kirkcaldy knew Lane couldn't have been shot from where Blake claimed and learned

that a woman matching Blake's description had bought a revolver in Winnipeg weeks before the killing.

Faced with the evidence, Blake confessed. Blake, 21, was a British orphan who arrived in Manitoba 10 years before.

She told Kirkcaldy she was jealous of Lane and loved the victim's children, suggesting she believed she could take Lane's place in the family. Some people have theorized that Blake and Mary's husband, Robert Lane, had had an affair.

Blake was hanged on Dec. 27.

— Crimes of the Century, Bill Redekop

**1912:** The police force faces scandal as the Moral and Social

Reform League asks city council to appoint a judge to investigate accusations surrounding gambling and prostitution.

Chief Const. Watson Boyd, Sgt. Charles Currie and constables Wills, Kilby, Carter, Holbrook, H. Boyd, Speers and Martin were accused of being "negligent regarding bawdy and gambling houses."

With council's agreement, Judge T.D. Cumberland was appointed to head up a commission. Former police officer Alonza Rowe told the commission that the gamblers he arrested had called him a fool for not taking bribes like the other members of the force.

David Felkner accused Chief Boyd of entertaining women in

his office including a prisoner let out of her cell.

An audit of police force cash records showed they were incomplete and vital papers missing.

In the end, council fired every member of the force except one recently arrived officer, J.H. West, who was made sergeant and put in charge of the force until a new chief could be found.

—The Wheat City, Fred McGuinness

**1933:** It's a 74-year-old murder mystery which still awaits to be solved.

In July, David J. Wilshaw, the 75-year-old Dominion Bank janitor and messenger, was found dead in his 11th Street cottage.

He was stabbed in the back of

the neck.

To local children he was known as "Peanuts" because the likable widower would give them peanuts when they visited his cottage on 17th Street.

Wilshaw would eat his meals at the home of the Moore family on Princess Avenue. When he failed to show up for lunch, Nick Moore peered through Wilshaw's window to see the victim lying on the floor near a pile of burned clothing.

After 18 hours of testimony it took an inquest jury nine minutes to decide that Wilshaw met his death at the hands of person or persons unknown. No killer has been ever been found.

Nothing seemed to be missing, there were no signs of strug-

gle, no weapon was found and police never established a motive.

— Fred McGuinness

**1956:** Toronto businessmen D. Hubert Cox and Hugh Paton gain control of Brandon Packers by purchasing the shares of founder J.C. Donaldson.

The purchase was made with funds raised through the sale of Brandon Packer bonds, but Cox and Paton were charged with issuing a false prospectus for a \$400,000 bond issue.

Ultimately, Paton and Cox were each sentenced to seven years in prison. The Court of Appeal later reduced their sentences to four each.

—The Wheat City, Fred McGuinness

**2002:** When a Brandon teen disappears, police launch a Hollywood-style sting to expose her killer.

Erin Chorney, 18, disappeared in April 2002. Police treated it as a missing-person case at first but in time it became apparent she was likely the victim of foul play.

Brandon police immediately focused on Chorney's former boyfriend Michael Bridges, who had been charged weeks earlier with assaulting Chorney and admitted being the last person to see her.

But he strongly maintained his innocence and police were unable to find any direct evidence tying him to a crime.

The RCMP was brought in to assist and developed an elaborate

ruse in the fall of 2003.

During several months, Bridges was slowly duped into believing he was part of a powerful organized crime group in which the key to advancement was confessing his past sins to the mysterious, all-knowing "Boss."

In February 2004, as a hidden video camera rolled, Bridges said he choked Chorney unconscious, then decided to "finish her off." He said he dug up a fresh grave in the graveyard behind his home, put Chorney's body in it and covered it up.

Bridges was convicted in June 2005 of first-degree murder following a jury trial and given a mandatory life sentence with no parole for 25 years.

The Court of Appeal upheld

the conviction on Oct. 6.

— Mike McIntyre, Winnipeg Free Press

**2004:** Residents are shocked by the double homicide of retired Brandon doctors, Noel and Doreen Joubert.

Police officers and firefighters faced a gruesome scene when they broke down the door of the couple's Almond Crescent home on Sept. 4. Inside, they found the bludgeoned bodies of Noel, 78, and Doreen, 75.

Their son, 39-year-old Paul Joubert, was quickly identified as the sole suspect. He was arrested on Sept. 10 in Port Alberni, B.C., after a six-day manhunt.

Psychiatric records showed that Paul Joubert had been diag-

nosed as having delusional disorder, hypomania, paranoid schizophrenia and bi-polar mood disorder with psychotic features and suffered from recurrent delusions that his father was trying to kill him.

Prosecutors declared the case closed when Paul handed himself in the psychiatric ward of the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg on Jan. 31, 2005.

He was at the locked-down facility awaiting a court-ordered mental health assessment to determine if he was fit to stand trial.

— Brandon Sun

Compiled by Ian Hitchen, Brandon Sun



## Some Strange Brandon Laws:

## Water Use And Motor Vehicle Driving In The Early Days

### PARCHED LAWN?

From the City of Brandon Waterworks Department, May 1, 1904:

Water users are required to take notice of the following, from By-law No. 521 Section 18, as amended by By-law No. 613:

*“The use of water for Lawn Service shall be restricted to the period between the first day of May and the first day of October in each year and between the hours of SIX p.m. and ELEVEN p.m.”*

The penalty for infringement was a fine of up to \$50, plus court costs, or up to three weeks in jail.

### LICENSE AND REGISTRATION

From a driving examination, Jan. 23, 1911:

Note — The speed limits of this city and province is as follows: Business sections of the city, 10 miles an hour; Residential, 15 miles an hour; Turning corners, 4 miles an hour; Speed limits outside of city and towns, 20 miles an hour.

A copy of these laws may be had from provincial government.

Remember, you must give assistance when horses becomes frightened — stop your car and engine if possible.

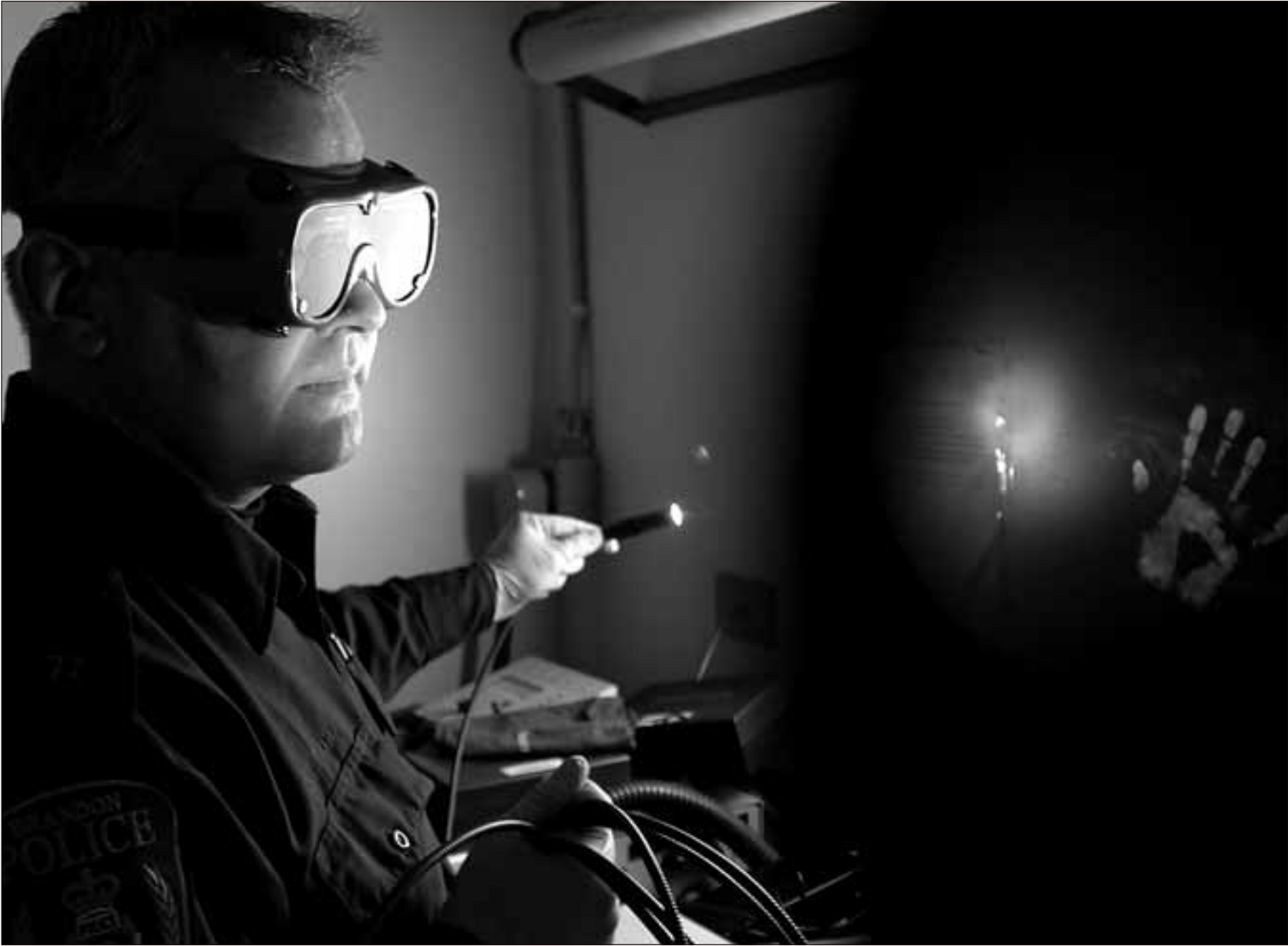
In ascending a steep hill, the following rules apply — get a good start and make it on high speed if possible. If engine labours, go back to second speed ... continues to labour, go back into first.

If engine knocks in any speed, you must retard your spark until knock disappears. If the low speed is out of order, you must turn your car at bottom of hill and back up it.

On descending a hill, stop your car at top of hill, have your gasoline shut off and have your clutch engaged, remove lever to low speed. The compression of the engine will act as a brake and the car will move down very slowly. If it runs too fast, you must apply foot brake. If hill is not too steep, you may go down on second or even high speed.

If your car is heading for curb or side walk, always press both feet and apply emergency brake — and by all means **don't get excited**.

## CSI Brandon Employs Latest Technology



COLIN CORNEAU/BRANDON SUN

Const. Bruce Klassen uses an argon laser to highlight a handprint on a wall at the Brandon Police Service's Identification Unit in early 2007.

# Crime and Punishment

## Whipping At The Old Gaol Was A Public Spectacle In The 19th Century

BY FRED MCGUINNESS

By the time Brandon was 10 years of age, it had left its tent-town image behind it and was now erecting buildings of stone and steel.

One of these was the local jail, although for many more years, it would be given the English spelling of “gaol.”

There was a jail, and this word was always given the British spelling of gaol.

The justice system may have been primitive, but it worked.

I can say this because of a yellowed clipping from this newspaper's edition of February 19, 1892.

I read the story of Bryce, and this is the only name used to describe him.

### ASSAULTED A YOUNG GIRL

Bryce assaulted a young girl, was charged, convicted, and sentenced to six months in custody and 15 strokes of the lash.

The lash was administered in the jail yard before a large

crowd. In case you think this sounds like an extract from “Tale of Two Cities,” you are correct. It lacked only Madam Dufarge and her knitting needles.

“Bryce, step forward,” said the warden, and Bryce did as he was bid. On instruction he took off his shirt.

Jail employees strapped him to a large wooden triangle which had been built for this purpose. His arms were extended over his head.

In preparation for this

process, a local doctor had examined him and certified that he was in good health.

When Gaoler Noxon said “Ready,” the man whose duty it was to administer the punishment stepped forward. He was holding the whip, a short-handled instrument with 12 strings of knotted whipcord.

### THE LASH IS APPLIED

Gaoler Noxon nodded and the lash was applied. It swished through the air and each of its

strings left blood-red traces where it struck. Noxon called out the strokes up to 10, when there was a brief respite. At this point Bryce straightened up and called out, “My God, be with me.”

At the 15th stroke there was an audible sigh from the spectators.

The scribe who observed this brutality became quite graphic when the whipping was over.

He describes the prisoner's back as a mass of “great blisters, blue-black lumps and ridges.”

## Arrival Of The Klan A Dark Chapter In The City’s History

A dark chapter from Brandon's early days:

From The Brandon Sun, Nov. 5, 1927, a story which says 25 persons attended an organizational meeting of the KKK at city hall, and that there would soon be a permanent office located here.

April 29, 1927. There was a public meeting sponsored by the KKK and addressed by Dr. J. H. Hawkins.

May 25, 1928. A fiery cross was burned by the KKK on the highest

point of the north hill and 300 persons attended.

Sept. 15, 1928. Another KKK cross-burning on the north hill. There were 600 present, including a women's choir.

July 10, 1929. A public meeting of the KKK at city hall.

Thankfully, as suddenly as the KKK may have made some inroads, they appear to have then quickly vanished.

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# The Arts Always With Us

## CREATIVE EXPRESSION A CORNERSTONE OF THE COMMUNITY

BY JOANNE F. VILLENEUVE

From the early settlers' choral participation in Sunday worship to today's musical productions and multi-media exhibits, the arts have grown alongside Brandon.

Here are some of the milestones in the city's artistic landscape:

**1882** — Choral singing, usually by an all male choir, was a common thing in the First Baptist Church, St. Paul's United and other churches of the day.

**1897** — Singer Dame Emma Albani gave a concert in Brandon.

**1903** — The 150-voice Festival Chorus performed for the Cycle of Musical Festivals of the Dominion of Canada.

**1906** — Brandon (College) University offers music classes, in voice and piano, for the first time. The following year, W.L. Wright became the first director of the music department. Concurrently, the construction of the Brandon College ladies' residence was complete and the top floor boasted an art studio, from where art classes were offered.

**1907** — Teacher of art at Brandon College, Henrietta Hancock and grade school art teacher Isabel Sinclair thought an art club would be an asset to Brandon and in the fall of that year, the first meeting of the Brandon Art Club was held in the newly-built YMCA building. Within a few years, the membership was up from 34 original members to 84 and the group moved from the College's studio to First Methodist church, then ten years later to St. Paul's Presbyterian church. Along with lectures about art, with subjects like 18th century English painters, ancient architecture, and the European school of art, there were also short musical performances, with no less than four performers. Full recitals were also hosted under the auspices of the Brandon Art Club. The first president was Madge Young Clement.

**1912** — Led by John Edward Hughes, the Brandon Choral Society was comprised of 60 voices and performed with the Minneapolis and St. Paul Symphony Orchestra.

**1920s** — The Brandon Art Club opens its visual art exhibits to the public, including paintings by H.V. Fanshaw, J.E. Schafflein, Mary Dignam, and Walter J. Phillips. The club also sponsored six concerts — four programs of religious music, one of folk music and a recital by pianist Mark Hambourg.

**Mid-1920s** — The focus of the Brandon Operatic Society was musicals and operettas, like "The Arcadians", "Merrie England" and "The Country Girl". These productions were directed by Marjorie Johnson, who also starred, and were pre-

sented on the stage at city hall. This group was dissolved in 1940 because the war led to a dearth of male actors.

**1927** — The Brandon Festival of the Arts, which is held annually to this day, was launched, with the endorsement of the Brandon School Board. In its first year, the adjudicator for all classes was Ethel Kinley of Winnipeg. In future years, the festival, British adjudicators were invited to judge. Today, adjudicators come from all parts of Canada.

**1927** — An arts and crafts studio was launched by the Brandon Art Club, with 44 classes that included leather-work, weaving, tapestry, sculpture, wood carving and others. Music continued to be featured in this decade, but less emphasis was place on this portion of the club's gatherings.

**1928** — Records show evidence that The Brandon Dramatic Society put on plays during this year.

**1928** — Radio service was available to households who owned the forebears of modern radios. The programming included concerts featuring local vocalists and organists.

**1929** — The Western Manitoba Music Festival, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Brandon, was initiated after the popular appeal of the Brandon Festival of the Arts. A year later the two festivals were merged.

**1929** — The Brandon College Students' Association put on the play "Daddy Long Legs".

**1931** — The Brandon Collegiate Dramatic Society put on a play simply titled "Pigs".

**1940s** — During the war years, the Wheat City Arena was an RCAF manning depot and was closed to the public, with a few exception, including a sold out show featuring film star and singer Dame Gracie Fields.

**1944** — The Brandon Art Club began offering scholarships of \$50 to help talented students pursue art education. Three years later, the club exhibited works on loan from the National Gallery.



Participants in a School of Music recital (above) during the 1940s and attendees of a 1950s square dance (below). Both groups seem to be having a really good time.

**mid 1940s** — For a decade or so, the Brandon Little Theatre produced plays like "Blythe Spirit" by Noel Coward and "Pygmalion".

**1948** — As part of the requirements for his doctoral studies, psychology professor Curly Tyler had to develop a club in Brandon. He chose to start a square dancing group, which lasted until 1952. Some of the regulars included Dr. and Mrs. Anhurst, Edith Laycock, Bill Clement, Dood Cristal, Mary Gooden, Hugh Knowlton, Ken and Bud McDiarmid, Bob and JoAnn Myers, Jack Purdy, Mr. and Mrs. Murray Simmons, among others.

**1949** — The Earl Oxford Junior high school drama group presented a one-act play entitled "The Big Help" at the 11th provincial festival hosted by the Manitoba Drama League.

**1950s** — Until 1962, the Brandon College Players presented dramas and comedies like "My Three Angels" and Gore Vidal's "A Visit to a Small Planet."

... SEE 'THROUGH'  
ON PAGE TWENTY-EIGHT



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# Through The Years

## ARTSLINE: 1950S TO THE PRESENT

... FROM 'ARTS ALWAYS' ON PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN

**1950s** — The Brandon Art Club may have been without a home base, but it was so well run that it became part of the Western Canada Art Circuit, which also included Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Regina. Most of the exhibits were displayed at the public library, though the YWCA lounge and the CNR hotel also temporarily housed a few. There was a demonstration of ceramics by Leo Mol, an Inuit and First Nations artist exhibit, other National Gallery of Canada travelling shows. Eventually, a permanent space in the library was appointed for gallery use. At least 12 exhibits were displayed per year.

**1950s** — Composite High School and St. Michael's Academy were active in drama, presenting plays like "Little Women" and "Girl Crazy" to Brandon audiences.

**1950s to 1960s** — Dance teacher Rosalie Boroditsky taught a generation of young girls in her home studio.

**1953** — The Brandon Women's Musical Club regularly presented recitals by young, up-and-coming performers of the day, until 1961.

**1954** — The Cinema Club of Brandon showed National Film Board films and foreign movies, like "The Great Train Robbery", "Panique", and "Summer Rhapsody", in the Oak Theatre. This group lasted for two seasons.

**1955** — Television comes to Brandon. CKX, the first station in town, was a private CBC affiliate. Four years later, the station submitted a request to expand its reach as far away as The Pas. Some of the early programming involved local performers in variety-style shows.

**1957** — The Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra performed in Brandon to help the city celebrate its 75th anniversary. Tickets for that concert were 75 cents for children and prices for adults ranged from \$1.50 to \$3.25.

**1958** — The Toronto-based Canadian Players' Touring Co. stopped to perform Romeo and Juliet as well as Pygmalion in the Wheat City Arena. The following year, they presented My Fair Lady.

**1959** — The Allied Arts Council was formed, at which time the City offered the use of a mansion on Louise Avenue and a small grant.

**1961** — Local playwright Don S. Williams produced his first play "Snows of Eden", on the city hall's auditorium stage.

**1965** — The Western Manitoba Philharmonic choir performed two concerts a year, tackling works like The Messiah and Mozart's Requiem. They performed regularly until 1976. Conductors included Lucien Needham, Leonard Mayoh, Derek Morphy and Peter Allen.

**1969** — The Brandon University Repertory Players was active on campus. In 1971, a community group called Dimension Drama evolved from the BU group. Drama returned to the university with Brandon University Drama Society.

**1969** — The construction of the Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium has meant that Canadian and international artists, bands, orchestras and other performers — like Ballet British Columbia, Bruce Cockburn, Burton Cummings, the Huron Carole, Anton Kuerti, the Don Messer Show, Jann Arden, Tanya Tucker, Stuart McLean, the Canadian Idol winners and many, many more — had a Brandon venue in which to perform. Regulars in this venue are the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, which christened the boards on Oct. 4, 1969.

**1972** — The Keystone Centre opens its doors, giving Brandon the opportunity to hear big named bands and acts, like Alice Cooper, Nickelback, The Harlem Globe Trotters, Alabama, The Guess Who, Great Big Sea and



FILE PHOTOS

Young participants in a 1960s arts festival (top); Brandon Folk Festival organizing committee members Keay Dobson-Galletz and Drew Caldwell (middle) and Chilean folksinger Hugo Torres performs during the first annual Brandon Folk Festival in August 1986.

dozens of others.

**1973** — After years of ballet classes taught in Brandon by senior students from the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, through the Allied Arts Centre, Barbara Ehnes established the first permanent dance school here. She called it the Brandon School of Dance, which originally was a branch for the RWB program, but exists today as a privately owned dance studio. The following year, the Brandon Dance Ensemble — a semi-professional offshoot of the School — was formed.

**Early 1980s** — Dance instructor Lois Hyndman opened up the Willowdale Dance Centre. A few years later, dancer and educator Linda Kearns joined her in a business and teaching partnership, until 1994.

**1976** — The first Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition, which rotates annually between voice, piano and strings, was launched. Some past winners include pianists Jon Kimura Parker, Jamie Parker and Heather Schmidt, violinists Gwen Hoebig and James Ehnes, and vocalists Nancy Argenta and Ben Heppner.

**1981** — The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra begins annual five-concert series in Brandon.

**1981** — As a project for her masters thesis, musician and educator Elizabeth Grant established the Brandon Conservatory Chorale and its off-shoots — the Boys' Choir, the Apprentice Choir, the Concert Choir and the Chamber Choir.

**1983** — The first Brandon Jazz Festival opened the door for an annual gathering of middle and high school students studying jazz, in a non-competitive setting, with world-class adjudicators. Evenings during the festival feature performances by nationally-acclaimed jazz musicians.

**1984** — A new exhibition and gallery space was built in the Centennial Library/Arts Centre of Western Manitoba building (which now houses Convergys), downtown on Princess St.

**1985** — The Brandon Folk Music and Art Festival kicked off its first edition. Musicians who have since performed at the annual event include the Crash Test Dummies, das macht SHOW!, Ben Sures, Scrub MacDuhk, the Wailin' Jennys, Harry Manx, Fred Penner and others.

**1985** — Interest in community theatre was sparked again and Theatre 85 was created. Today, after a few incarnations, that troupe is called Spotlight on Shilo.

**1995** — Local dancer Monique Roy-Keller launched her own school called Steppin' Time Dance Studio, while dancer and educator Linda Kearns set off on her own, after years at the Willowdale Dance Centre, to set up Dance Images.

**1997** — High school educator George Buri launched a community theatre troupe called 7 Ages Productions. Musicals like Jesus Christ Superstar, Cabaret and Godspell have been produced by Buri and his colleagues as have a few plays.

**1997** — Brandon gets its own classical ensemble as an idea of T. Patrick Carrabré and Bruce Shavers, two local composers, comes to fruition with the formation of the Brandon Chamber Players.

**1999** — Though many recitals and concerts by visiting musicians had been hosted by the Brandon University School of Music through the decades, a new series entitled The Pro Series was launched. Since then, the School has hosted concerts featuring Charles Rossen, James Ehnes, Bob Brookmeyer, the Penderetski String Quartet, Marc-André Hamelin, Pierre Réacg and other nationally recognized talents. In the last few years, sub-series have been added, like the Mozart series designed to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the composer's birth and the dean's series.

**2000** — The Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba moved to the former Eaton's store space, where it took up residence on the second and third floors. Every season, the AGSM school offers a wide range of courses to members and to the public alike. As well, there are two exhibit spaces — the main gallery in which works by nationally and internationally acclaimed artists are displayed and the community gallery where local artists' work is displayed. The new gallery is environmentally controlled, a necessity to ensure the safekeeping of art works.

**2001** — Mecca Productions began offering drama and musical theatre classes to children in the community. The following year, the directors produced the first of many musicals, which have included Footloose, The Sound of Music, Little Shop of Horrors and Music Man.

**2004** — The first annual Lieutenant Governor's Winter Festival allows the community to learn more about the art, the music, the dance, the cultural heritage of the ethnic groups that make up our city.

**2006** — The Glen P. Sutherland Gallery of Art was unveiled at Brandon University. Works by students are showcased in the space. There are also the underground and the curve galleries on campus which display a variety of art shows.

**2007** — Brandon's newest art venue, Verge Gallery, opens on Rosser Ave.

**2007** — Area landmarks, like the Brandon Mental Health Centre, are being used as locations for filming projects.

[jvilleneuve@brandonsun.com](mailto:jvilleneuve@brandonsun.com)

### IN THE YEAR ... 1952

The King was dead. The Sun recorded: "There is sorrow today, a sense of personal loss. On the streets, in coffee bars, across store counters and office desks, the King is remembers ... For the first time in 51 years, Brandon courts were opened 'in the name of the Queen.'"

As the city continued to grow, planners began to consider something other than the grid system. "More gracious living" was promised where curves and crescents supplanted rectangular intersections, and where lanes had been eliminated.

The mayor offered his opinion that the day was coming when local stores would remain open one of more week-nights and close all Saturday.

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# Making A Difference

## In Every Era, Wheat City Women Have Been Front And Centre

BY JOANNE F. VILLENEUVE

There have been countless women who have made a positive impact on all aspects of life in Brandon — politics, education, the arts, communications and other areas — and many still are actively doing so.

Without their actions, their words, their passions, their contributions, this city would not be what it is today. Among some of the most notable women who called Brandon home are:

**Emma Bertrand** — one of the first to organize plays and concerts in Brandon; Rhoda Tennant — Brandon's first alderwoman in 1935;

**Beatrice Brigden** — candidate for the Independent Labor Party in the 1930 federal election and organizer of the Labour Women's Social and Economic Conference;

**Brandon Council of Women** — from 1894 onward, the aim of this women's group was to protect women from sexual predators;

**Aleta Clement** — wife of Judge Stephen E. Clement, progressive, courageous woman who put class, ethnicity and personal interests secondary to the public good;

**Madge Young Clement** — wife of Mayor Stephen A. Clement and the first charter president of the Brandon Art Club, founded in 1907;

**Flora Cowan** — volunteer, activist, dean of women at Brandon University, second alderwoman on city council for 16 years, spearheaded the building of Fairview Home;

**Ellie Crystall** — role model, women's rights activist and innovative teacher;

**Betty Gibson** — teacher in rural Manitoba, Brandon and South Africa, a principal, a professor at Brandon University and an assistant superintendent for the Brandon School Division, and is said to have played a crucial role in the development and implementation of mathematics and language arts in the province's curriculum;

**Eleanor Kidd** — nurse, a rescuer of orphaned and abandoned animals, founder of the Brandon SPCA;

**Kaye Rowe** — longtime Brandon Sun writer, supporter of the arts and fashion maven;

**Peggy Sharpe** — accomplished musician, educator and administrator who helped the School of Music at Brandon University develop into the nationally recognized entity that it is today;

**Audrey Silvius** — along with a group of supporters, helped to create

the Brandon Friendship Centre.

**Women of the North End (circa 1924):** unhappy with the inferior roads being built in their neighbourhood — in comparison to the paved south end streets, theirs were spread with ashes — some 200 women protested by throwing sticks and stones at the city employees who were grading the streets; no charge were laid.



Some contemporary women who now make a difference today:

**Marlene Bertrand** — founding director of the Westman women's shelter;

**Jan Chaboyer** — president of the Brandon and District Labour Council;

**Robin Chant** — first female firefighter in the Brandon Fire/Emergency Service;

**Colleen Cutschall** — internationally renown artist and educator;

**Keay Dobson-Golletz** — educator, Taekwon-Do third degree black belt and instructor, role model, community advocate;

**Carol Fisher** — first female police officer in the Brandon Police Service;

**Marilyn Grambo** — founding member and volunteer administrator of Habitat for Humanity Brandon;

**Beatrice Jolly** — educator and community activist;

**Leah LaPlante** — vice-president of the Southwest Region of the Manitoba Métis Federation;

**Eva McKay** — elder and advocate for aboriginal people;

**Ruth Pryzner** — environmental advocate;

**Marion Robinsong** — chair of



FILE PHOTOS

The activist group (above) formed around opposition to the Meech Lake accord. At left, Eleanor Kidd herself and Mayor Elwood Gorrie at the dedication ceremony for Eleanor Kidd Park.

## The YWCA Story Began A Hundred Years Ago

☞ The Brandon YWCA began in April 1907, with a three-storey Residence on 14th Street known as the “Park House.” Within six weeks there were 25 residents.

☞ In 1909, the Residence moved to a new site on 11th Street, and in 1911, the Brandon YWCA was incorporated by a special act of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. By 1917, the cornerstone of the current building at 148 11th St. was in place.

The building of the residence was made possible by a bequest from the estate of Henry Meredith, a local businessman, in the amount of \$10,000. In 2002, we named the residence Meredith Place in recognition of this bequest.

☞ Throughout the years, a wide

variety of services have been offered to the community — from the Business Girls’ Club, to the New Canadians Club, to war-time services.

The YWCA offered young girls and women English language classes and courses to assist them with self-improvement and employment. Literacy classes, teen clubs, and a day care have been offered at the YWCA over the years.

In particular, the YWCA Residence became a safe refuge for rural women who moved into the cities to secure job training and employment.

A Day Care, Literacy classes, the Y’s Choice Consignment Shop (opened in 1962, closed in 2002) and our Women's Shelter (opened in 1978) all originally opened in the Meredith Place Residence.



It is a time to reflect on the struggles and accomplishments of our prairie settlers. Pioneer life was not easy and the daily chores of managing a house were more than a full time occupation. Recipe books were not common and cooking was very much a passed down art of trial and error. Food was prepared from scratch with whatever ingredients were available. There was no running to the convenience store for milk and eggs! Jonnycakes or fried cornbread were a tasty, nourishing, and easy to prepare favorite.

### Jonnycakes Recipe, circa 1882

- 3 handfuls of cornmeal
- 1 handful of sugar
- a pinch of salt
- enough boiling water to make a smooth batter (less than 1 cup)

Combine all the ingredients & cook on a hot greased skillet until browned on both sides. Makes 10 – 12. Try it on your campfires this summer!

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## Old Fashioned Bargains



*We are indeed fortunate to have this opportunity to salute Brandon on their 125th Anniversary. It is a time for us to remember the richness of natural beauty which greeted the pioneers. Remember it was this natural wealth which encouraged them to settle here, build homes and raise families.*

So during our 125th year let us do our part in keeping Brandon lush and fertile. Let's do our part in maintaining that which is beautiful and in restoring that which we have neglected.

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# Vintage Homes

BY CURTIS BROWN

Once a symbol of a small-town political rivalry, Jude Kuryliw's house has become a place for sharing and co-operation.

Kuryliw, her husband Andrew and brother-in-law Ken share a historic Brandon home at 318 11th St. that once belonged to two political rivals, John A. McDonald and Harry Cater.

McDonald, one of the city's earliest pioneers, built the three-storey, 3,200 sq. ft. brick home in 1906. McDonald, who owned a men's furnishings business, lived in the house for more than 30 years until he sold it to Cater, the city's long-time mayor who ran his first victorious campaign against McDonald in 1914.

The Kuryliws are just the fourth family to own the 102-year-old house, which still features most of the original wood-work and windows.

"We wanted to live communally," Jude explains. "A house this size is too big for one family."

At 3,200 sq. ft. on three levels, the house is plenty big enough for each of its three residents to have enough space. That results in a big heating bill each winter, something they hope a new roof and some other small improvements to the big house will fix.

"It's a labour of love," Jude said. "It feels good to get it back in shape."

Though some of them are now gone, downtown Brandon is full of old houses whose former residents read like a who's who of the young city's leading citizens. From business people to politicians, the leading lights of the Wheat City a century ago lived in style at a number of desirable civic addresses, many of which remain in high demand today.

#### 324 13th St.

The former home of J.D.



CURTIS BROWN/BRANDON SUN

Historical houses, like this one at 404 13th St., add charm and flavour to Brandon's streets.

MacGregor was one of the first houses built on 13th Street south of Lorne Avenue. MacGregor, the first president of the Provincial Exhibition and lieutenant-governor of Manitoba from 1929 to 1935, built the Queen Anne-style house along the west side of the block and enclosed the yard with a wrought-iron fence. The 5,000 sq. ft. house has undergone four expansions since construction, with the last add-on coming in 1915. It currently belongs to Deveryn and Janette Ross.

#### 342 13th St.

The second-oldest surviving home on the west side of 13th Street, this three-storey house features one of the most unique roof lines in the city — a stepped gable that rises to a pinnacle above the highest window. It was built in 1896 for F.G.A. Henderson, the City of Brandon's first solicitor and the registrar of the local land titles office. Carved into five suites about 20 years ago, it recently sold and is expected to undergo renovations to the main floor, realtor Bev Powell said.

#### 404 13th St.

Another Queen Anne-style home, this house on the corner of 13th Street and Louise Avenue is distinctive because of its pale red brick, which was manufactured in Hartney by the Manitoba Brick Company. Designed by W.A. Elliott — the architect of choice for many prominent Brandon families around the turn of the century — this three-storey house was built for local stationery merchant Ernest Christie.

Like his house, Christie's business endures as Christie's Office Plus, a locally owned office supply store that recently expanded to Alberta. The home, a municipal heritage site, belongs to the Salvation Army and is now a residential crisis centre.

#### 262 13th St.




Believed to be one of the oldest buildings in the city, this two-storey home is now instantly recognizable for its bright blue paint job. Just as it was when it was built in 1882, the house is rented out to tenants today. Its first owner was John McBurnie,

Happy 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Brandon!

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# Adorn City Streets

a Montreal lace merchant, who rented it out to Thomas Wastie, a government employee who fought against Louis Riel in the 1885 Métis rebellion in Saskatchewan.

**404 11th St.**

This home on the southwest corner of 11th Street and Louise Avenue belonged to William Burchill, the co-owner of the Burchill and Howie Meat Market on Rosser Avenue. Also a Queen Anne-style home, the 102-year-old home features a hip roof on the second floor that covers an oval porch which curves around the northeast corner of the house.

**458 12th St.**

This Georgian Revival-style house was built with beer money — it belonged to Peter Payne, president of the Empire Brewing Company and one of two major brewers established here during the city’s early years. Built in

1902, it was designed by Walter Shillinglaw, the former city engineer who rivalled W.A. Elliott as the chief architect of many early Brandon homes. Converted to apartments in the 1950s, it is a single-family home once again.

**422 12th St.**

This unique-looking home on the west side of 12th Street is known today as Blair House, but its original owner was Alexander C. Fraser, owner of the A.C. Fraser Department Store. An Italianite-style two-storey house, it has a new veranda but retains most of the original features from when it was first built in 1907. It is presently a revenue property owned by Les and Shelley Lesack.

**1340 Louise Ave.**

Until Dr. Sonny Dhalla built a massive house on Waterloo Crescent, the home commonly known as Moreland Manor was the largest house in Brandon.



CURTIS BROWN/BRANDON SUN

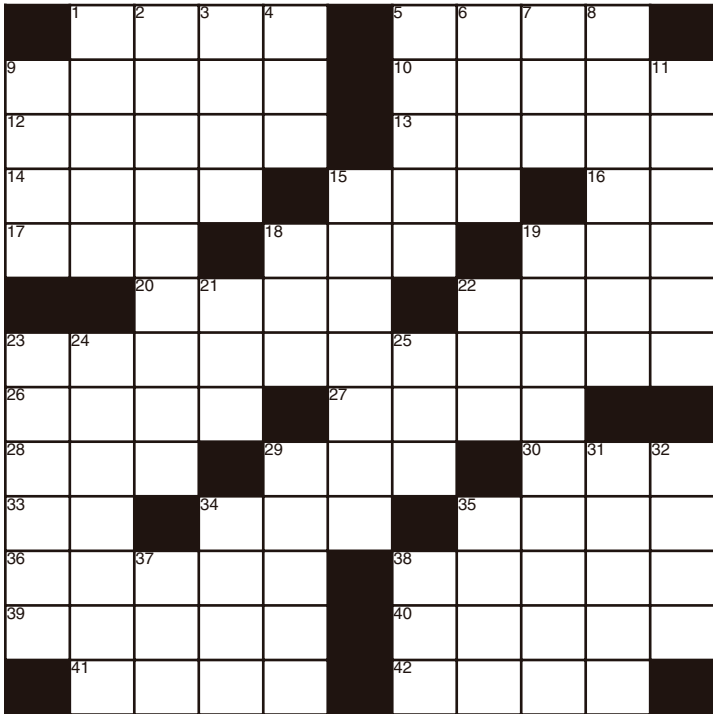
A wide architectural variety of homes, like this unique building at 422 12th St., grace the residential areas of Brandon.

Constructed by William Bell and his brother — who designed many of the houses built around the outbreak of the First World War — this house was con-

structed in 1914 for George A. Patterson, who managed the Brandon Electric Light Company and later became president of the Canada Gas and Electric Company. Once converted into apartments, it now belongs to Dr. Derry Decter and Shari Decter-Hirst.

**1605 Victoria Ave.**

Another Shillinglaw house, this red-and-white Tudor-style home was constructed in 1912 for Henry F. Maley, the president of the Brandon Brewing and Bottling Company. When Canada implemented Prohibition in 1916 and put a chill on the brewing business, Maley sold it to Dr. Henry McDiarmid, whose family kept the house for two generations. When it later became a bed and breakfast, the original owner became the inspiration for the new business’ name — Casa Maley.



Fancy a challenge? Try your hand at a puzzle from the past. Here’s the daily crossword from the Brandon Sun on Wednesday, March 13, 1957.

ACROSS

- 1. Strike
- 5. Stylish (colloq.)
- 9. Bondsman
- 10. Type of pneumonia
- 12. Port, claret, etc.
- 13. Genus of beetles
- 14. Sums up
- 15. Cereal grass
- 16. Roman numeral
- 17. God of pleasure (Egypt.)
- 18. Roman money
- 19. Presidential nickname
- 20. Narrow roadway
- 22. River (Eng.)
- 23. Bearing a spine
- 26. Wife of a knight
- 27. Man's name
- 28. Single unit
- 29. Exist
- 30. Astern
- 33. Father
- 34. Twice (mus.)
- 35. Mix
- 36. Set solidly
- 38. Straighten (var.)
- 39. Fried lightly
- 40. Crazy (slang)
- 41. Asterisk
- 42. Bearded

DOWN

- 1. Slip
- 2. Great election victory
- 3. Birds as a class
- 4. Footlike part
- 5. Kaolins
- 6. An asylum
- 7. Tree (P.I.)
- 8. Reindeer (N.A.)
- 9. Mop
- 11. Black Birds
- 15. Close-fitting jackets
- 18. Cuckoo
- 19. Hobby
- 21. Some
- 22. Town (Indiana)
- 23. Inclines
- 24. Summer hats
- 25. Before
- 29. Helper
- 31. Abounding in fish
- 32. Three, at cards
- 34. Greek letter
- 35. Not fast
- 37. Except
- 38. A wing

How’d you fare? Find the answer on Page Thirty-five.

**30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**Clement's Rexall Pharmacy**  
901 Rosser Avenue  
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- Handled vet supplies
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**Medical Centre Pharmacy**  
146-6th Street  
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- Pharmacist/Manager Tom Busch started in 1968 and is still dispensing
- Located beside Western Medical Clinic
- Delivery Service to Shilo

**Home Health Care Pharmacy (formerly Clement's Rexall Pharmacy)**  
3000 Victoria Avenue  
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Joss March Pharmacist/Manager

- Surgical Applicances
- Scooters
- Lift Chairs

**Super Thrifty Pharmacy**  
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- Drive Thru Pharmacy
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Cecil worked tirelessly to build his new company throughout the thirties and forties, weathering a series of dramatic nationwide events and changes including the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the post-war baby boom that followed. Through it all, his perserverance and spirit helped his small company grow.

In the early 1950s Cecil, now accompanied by sons Don and Bud, sold the Seventh Street property to Eaton’s and built a new headquarters at 857 18th Street. The building was completed in 1955, and housed the company’s printing plant and offices, where they remained until 1996.

During this time, the company continued to expand operations, adding equipment and staff as necessary to meet the growing needs of Brandon’s business and industrial communities.

In the Eighties, Don’s sons Michael and David joined the Leech Printing team, bringing further growth and expansion. The graphic arts industry also underwent dramatic and significant changes. The digital age had arrived with the introduction of desktop publishing and postscript printing technology. Leech Printing embraced the challenge, and quickly became a leader in digital imaging.

In 1996, on the eve of the company’s seventieth anniversary, Leech Printing purchased the property at 601 Braecrest Drive (formerly a Wheelies roller rink), and once again grew to provide their local and national clients with the latest in printing and graphic communications technology.

This trend continues into the new century, with many significant upgrades to the printing process, including CTP (Computer-to-Plate) and Large Format digital printing. The company has also expanded beyond its own doors to include four Quick Print locations, which serve the growing need for on-demand printing and digital services.

Now a third generation business, Leech Printing has grown with the City of Brandon, and is proudly operated much the same way it was in 1927 – with exceptional customer service, a creative and experienced staff, and the desire to grow and respond to the needs of the City of Brandon, and its people.

From everyone at Leech Printing, we offer warm congratulations and thanks to the City of Brandon for 125 great years.

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# Positive Energy Ensures City Growth

## Renowned Psychic Looks Into Future, And Finds A Few Surprises

BY MATT GOERZEN

Somewhere in Brandon today is the city's next great leader.

He is dark-haired, tall, heavy-set and charismatic. And he's still a child. When he becomes mayor — sometime in the next few decades — the city will grow like it has never grown before.

At least that's the picture painted by Debbie Kool, a renowned local psychic who peered into Brandon's future on a request by the Brandon Sun.

"He's smart, and he listens to people," Kool said as she sat before her crystal ball in her Brandon apartment. "He's worked his way from ground up, and he will make the city better. He's a natural born leader, and when he's in, he's in for a long time — about 30 years."

Brandon's future looks bright, Kool says, growing to triple its current size, with high-rise buildings, "but not traditional ones." Of course, that will be all thanks to our still-mysterious leader — who will take risks and take heat from the public, but ultimately be successful.

"It doesn't take a psychic to tell you Brandon will grow. But other cities will take notice of us."

Brandon can expect a large electronics manufacturing plant

to enter the city as our next major employer, although there will be many businesses to come.

And within 10 years, commercial air traffic will again begin to flow through Brandon Airport.

"We'll get it sooner than you think," Kool said. "Wouldn't it be lovely to have?"

But in order to do that, the whole airport will have to be scrapped, and rebuilt, in order to land larger planes. And it will be much more than just an airport, sporting entertainment venues and restaurants.

"It will be very high tech and polished, with a huge amount of glass when it's all done."

Kool says people will be smarter about how they live their lives, and Brandon itself will weed out lower-energy type people — "criminal types" — from city streets. But the psychic says Brandon city council may be making a mistake in how it is approaching the revitalization of the city's downtown.

"To make it new, it has to change completely."

But a casino downtown? A definite no-no.

"Casinos aren't good energy. They draw bad energy. You're not going to get the hoity-toity types down there."

The demographics of the city will change and grow. The rapid-



BRUCE BUMSTEAD/BRANDON SUN

In this photo illustration, psychic Debbie Kool gazes into her crystal ball as she makes some predictions for Brandon's future. So how does it look? Well, the future seems glowing.

ly expanding Chinese population will create a new Chinatown in Brandon, and people from several different countries will begin to change the face of Brandon forever.

Within the next 20 to 25 years, city council will build an amphitheatre somewhere in the middle of Brandon, which will

sport "amazing acoustics" for theatre and outdoor musical events.

In far graver news, Kool predicts a massive war in the Middle East that will affect the lives of several soldiers from CFB Shilo, in 20 to 25 years. But it will be a "smarter war" than the current Afghanistan mission.

And socially, people in the city's future will be more environmentally conscious, with more emphasis on green space within the city.

"The children of today will raise their own children differently, with fewer and fewer people getting married. Many people in relationships will decide to

live apart from each other."

Eventually, Kool predicts that Brandon will displace Winnipeg as a hub for traffic in the province, partly because the 'Peg has a lot of "negative energy."

"It's just energetically different. Brandon for the size of it, is not a bad place to live."

mgoerzen@brandonsun.com

# Proud History of Looking Forward

BY DAVID MCCONKEY

Begin in 1882 as a tiny settlement, mostly of tents. Reach 2007 as a bustling contemporary city. Quite the 125-year journey for Brandon!

Yet even in the earliest years, the inhabitants of Brandon were surprisingly impacted by modern technology and connected to the larger world.

Those thoughts occurred to me as I was looking through G. F. Barker's "Brandon: A City" and other sources about the city's history.

To start with, globalization gave birth to Brandon. People immigrated to Brandon only because the new railway was able to link the fledgling city to world markets.

News about the rest of the world has always been here. The Brandon Sun was publishing even before the city was incorporated.

Telephone service came in the 1880s. Electricity, too. City council in 1887 approved installing 15 street lamps that would provide electric light for

"all but moonlit nights."

The telegraph in the 1880s provided daily stock market quotes. The first annual Board of Trade dinner took place in 1889 in the "spacious, electrically-lighted Langham Hotel dining room."

Brandon residents, as well, have been interested in more than just living in a place to do business. Right from the start, Brandon citizens have been active in creating a civil society. They also have been participating in the great world issues of war and peace.

Social and charitable organizations have been operating in Brandon since the early years. Even before Brandon was incorporated, several churches were established.

The Young Men's Christian Association provided services to inmates at the jail and had a reading room where members wrote letters for the illiterate. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Children's Aid Society were going concerns.

Women were at the forefront

of many of these efforts. The founding of the Brandon Hospital Aid in 1892 was noted as the first time in the city's history that "women became an integral part of a community enterprise."

The Brandon chapter of the W.C.T.U. was active from the 1880s. This organization was most famous for promoting "temperance" or the abstinence from alcohol. But it was much more than that.

The W.C.T.U. was a feminist organization, advocating a number of social reforms to do with domestic violence, workers' rights, public health, sanitation, women's right to vote and international peace.

In Brandon, as in other Manitoba communities, the W.C.T.U. was very important. The organization, however, often annoyed the general society. Especially the men.

"Looking back at our life," Nellie McClung reflected, "I see we owed much to the activities of the W.C.T.U. and these initials, I hasten to explain, stand for 'Women's Christian

Temperance Union,' and not 'Women Continually Torment Us,' as some have believed."

Brandon citizens participated in these organizations as members of great international movements. In 1891, Miss Frances Willard, World President of the W.C.T.U., spoke in the city.

The Brandon chapter of the National Council of Women established the Victorian Order of Nurses in Brandon in 1897. This was part of a nation-wide program to honour the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Gen. William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, visited Brandon for two days in 1895. Large crowds came out to hear Booth describe the creation of a new "Army," an army not for war, but for peace.

War, however, like other national and global events, has always touched the people of Brandon.

Troops travelling on special trains on their way to fight in the North-West Rebellion stopped in Brandon in 1885. The troops

were warmly welcomed by the inhabitants of the city. The 90th Battalion Band played "several stirring airs."

Volunteers from Brandon took part in the South African War (1899-1902).

In 1901, the entire population of Brandon was just 5,700, yet 3,000 people gathered in outdoor services marking the death of Queen Victoria.

Five months later, Brandon citizens were able to watch a motion picture showing the funeral of the late monarch.

Brandon residents volunteered in large numbers to fight in the "Great War," or First World War, which started in 1914.

They enthusiastically celebrated the peace four years later. News of the Nov. 11, 1918, Armistice came to Brandon in the middle of the night. Soon "steam whistles, ringing bells and fireworks exploding in the night brought an end to all slumbers."

The populace, except for

those quarantined because of the global influenza pandemic, flocked to City Hall.

The rejoicing was vividly described in a newspaper report: "Flaming torches were waved in a thousand hands; men and women of staid years becoming again as boys and girls, danced along the streets, shouted, laughed, and sang."

The current Canadian military mission in Afghanistan connects residents of Brandon once more to war in a foreign land. A land where again in "fields the poppies blow."

Support our troops in times of war? Work to create a civil society here in the city and around the world? Participate in democratic debates about issues like world peace?

Ever since 1882, the people of Brandon have answered with an enthusiastic "Yes!"

For 125 years, the citizens of Brandon have been active in their city — a city at home in the war and peace of the global village.

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\* in effect from July 3 - August 26, 2007 (excluding August long weekend)

<b>PUBLIC SWIM</b>		<b>AQUAFIT</b>
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Sat. & Sun.	1-8pm	Wed. evening 6-7pm
		Tues. & Thurs. 12-1pm
<b>RED CROSS SWIM LESSONS</b>		<b>LAPSWIM</b>
Mon. – Fri. once daily for two weeks		7 days a week! 12-1pm
OR		Mon. & Fri. 6:30-10am
Mon. – Fri. twice daily for one week		Tues. – Thurs. 6:30-9am



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# RECENT HISTORY THROUGH THE CAMERA LENS



## Photos by Bruce Bumstead

### WELCOME HOME (2006):

Phillip Koblun puts his arm around his wife, Amber Koblun, and daughter, Camry Koblun, moment after arriving at CFB Shilo.

### NEW HOTEL (2005):

Window washer Greg Peters, of D.A. Matthews Window Cleaning of Winnipeg, removes the excess water from the pool atrium windows of the Canad Inns Brandon hotel on Victoria Avenue.

### EATON'S STAYING OPEN (1997):

Brandon Eaton's store manager Peter Meadows announced in July 1997 the doors would stay open at the downtown anchor business in the Brandon Gallery Mall.

### BRANDON LANDS JET SERVICE (1999):

Passengers depart from a WestJet flight which debuted at the Brandon Municipal Airport.

### WESTERN PREMIERS CONFERENCE (1998):

Premier Gary Doer laughs at a witty response by Alberta Premier Ralph Klein during a news conference at the 1998 Western Premiers' Conference held in Brandon.

### LET THE GAMES BEGIN (1997):

Manitoba athletes enter the Canada Games Sportsplex track and field area during the opening ceremonies of the 1997 Canada Summer Games.

### GOODBYE, ST. MIKE'S (2005):

Sister Betty Iris Bartush receives a warm welcome from a volunteer during a candle-light walk through the halls of St. Michael's Academy following a farewell service.

### HOT POTATOES (1999):

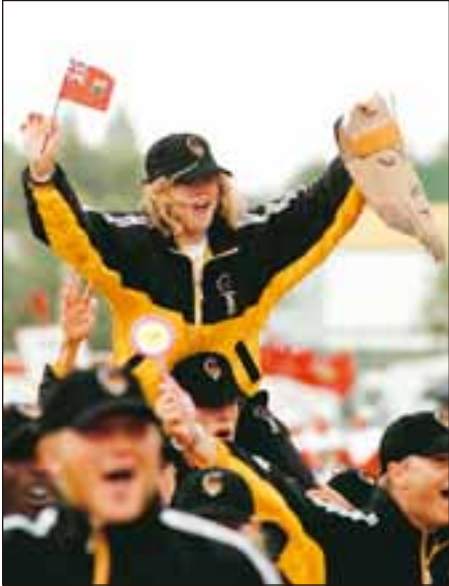
A potato plant fire in Carberry during a severe winter storm closed traffic along Highway 5.

### FALLEN COMRADE (2006):

Acting commanding officer Maj. Liam McGarry leads his fellow soldiers in a moment of silence for fallen comrade, Capt. Nichola Goddard, during a memorial service at the Frist Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery at CFB Shilo.

### SOURIS RIVER FLOOD (1999):

Water from the Souris River spills over its banks downstream from Melita.



# Happy 125th Brandon!

From everyone  
at

The Coca-Cola logo is displayed in its classic script font, set against a red background with white and yellow wavy lines and small white dots.



# Words of Wisdom From the Past Resonate Today

From: "Problems for Eighteenth Street," printed on the editorial page of the Brandon Sun on Oct. 3, 1957.

The importance of Eighteen Street north as an arterial highway is being emphasized daily. Traffic has increased tenfold in the past year and once the No. 1 bypass route is completed north of the city, Eighteenth Street will be one of the busiest thoroughfares in Brandon. For some time now, this street has been used for heavy traffic entered Brandon from the south, and routed for Winnipeg, or to points north. Already the roadway has suffered from its increasing use, and there are many problems facing the city in this connection.

The provincial government has intimated that future plans include a new bridge over the Assiniboine River. This should be pressed for, because the present structure will not be able to carry present-day loads for long. Almost as important as the bridge, is the need for an underpass, or over-pass, at the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Either of these two projects would require considerable engineering skill, and probable be very costly. Due to the rising elevation of the street in the vicinity of the tracks, the

construction problems would be amplified.

There is another phase too in the pressing need for an open route over the tracks. This was stressed this week when the fire department was answering a call to a home in the north-western section of the city. When the department arrived at the crossing on 18th Street, it found the way blocked temporarily by a passing train. Fortunately, the blaze was of a minor nature, and the short delay did not too seriously hamper fire-fighting efforts.

But where the emergency is great, a delay might not only result in a heavy fire loss, but in the loss of life itself.

It is not an uncommon sight some days to see Eighteenth Street traffic heading north, being backed up two blocks while the crossing is occupied. Normal operation of the railways requires this, and in the switching of cars, it is noted that railway employees are most considerate of the public and do not long delay the movement of autos and trucks.

It is inevitable that with the increasing volume of highway traffic, that our problems of handling it will multiply. But we should be doing considerable long-range planning right now, and be ready with the correct solution for those who will build the new highway.

# They Came From Brandon: Trent Frayne

Trent Frayne — Internationally renowned sportswriter: At the age of 23, he was rubbing elbows with baseball great Joe DiMaggio just moments before the first game of the 1941 World Series. His writing career was filled with beautiful crafted columns and 14 books about such sports personalities and the events that elevated them above the mundane. Born in here in 1913, Frayne was very involved in sports as a child and teenager, and when he was about 15 years old, he began contributing minor hockey articles to the *Brandon Sun*. He continued to write while attending Brandon College (now University), but before gradu-

ating, he accepted a job with the Canadian Press in Winnipeg. He worked for CP and the Tribune for four years. Before landing his first full-time sports-writing job with the now defunct Toronto Telegram, for which he covered the CFL Argonauts and International League's Maple Leafs baseball team. Prior to this, Frayne had a general reporting job for the Globe and Mail. Later, he became a feature writer for the Toronto Star as well as Maclean's. Now 88 years old, Frayne met noted journalist, broadcaster and activist June Callwood while both worked at the Globe and Mail in the 1940s and they were married until her death earlier this year.

## IN THE YEAR ... 1942

Gasoline rationing meant that walking was rediscovered in Brandon. And rubber was in short supply, too — tires and tubes were available to doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers, bus companies, police and fire departments only.

Another announcement from the Wartime Prices and Trade Board ordered hotel, restaurants and other eating establishments to remove sugar from the tables, and only to serve it when requested.

More rationing included one ounce of tea or four ounces of coffee per adult per week.

It was a cold winter: 40 inches of snow drifted through the streets, stalling motorized traffic and bringing forth horse-drawn vehicles in numbers not seen for years.

## IN THE YEAR ... 1947

City council decided, as a means of solving downtown motor vehicle problems, to institute metered parking on a year's trial. Two hundred standards were ordered for installation along Rosser Avenue from Sixth to 11th streets, also between Pacific and Princess avenues on Ninth and 10th streets. They came into force on Friday, Aug. 1 — at the

same time, it was decreed that only parallel parking would be allowed anywhere in Brandon. It was the end of angle parking.

That first day, downtown streets were almost barren of automobiles, “as motorists shunned the metered areas; however, other thoroughfares were fairly-well filled.” Just two weeks later, the first collection from parking standards brought returns of some \$200 — plus miscellaneous slugs and metal washers.

Later that year, council put aside \$2,000 to maintain an airfield at the former flying school ("the City must take the initiative if it wants an airport," Mayor Williamson contended).

As well, the first artificial ice surface in Brandon opened

Dec. 5. The opening event saw the Brandon Wheat Kings lose to the Winnipeg Monarchs.

## IN THE YEAR ... 1952

As another solution to ongoing traffic woes, civic governors designated Brandon's two main downtown arteries as one-way on a trial basis — cars would flow eastward along Rosser and westward on Princess, beginning Aug. 1. The decision was both condoned and condemned, but the “test” began as scheduled.

A Dec. 16 bylaw granted pedestrians the right to jaywalk — at their own risk.

**Answer key to crossword puzzle from Page Thirty-one.**

	S	L	A	P		C	H	I	C	
S	L	A	V	E		L	O	B	A	R
W	I	N	E	S		A	M	A	R	A
A	D	D	S		R	Y	E		I	V
B	E	S		A	E	S		A	B	E
		L	A	N	E		A	V	O	N
S	P	I	N	I	F	E	R	O	U	S
L	A	D	Y		E	R	I	C		
O	N	E		A	R	E		A	F	T
P	A		B	I	S		S	T	I	R
E	M	B	E	D		A	L	I	N	E
S	A	U	T	E		L	O	O	N	Y
	S	T	A	R		A	W	N	Y	



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# Happy **125th** Anniversary Brandon!

