

AJAKAJA

WINTER 2010 • ISSUE 33



ALBERTA ESTONIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY



Alberta Estonian Heritage Society 2010

The Alberta Estonian Heritage Society (AEHS) was formally established on April 23, 2005 to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Alberta's Estonian community, and to increase awareness of developments in Estonia.

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Ajakaja

AjaKaja is published semi-annually to inform members about Society activities and heritage topics.
Publication and distribution costs are covered by membership dues.

Members and friends are encouraged to submit articles, photographs and heritage-related items
to Eda McClung at emcclung@shaw.ca

Non-members may purchase AjaKaja for \$5.00 by contacting Eda McClung

Alberta Estonian Heritage Society(AEHS) website: www.aehs.ca

Visit "Alberta's Estonian Heritage" website: www.albertasource.ca/abestonians



AjaKaja

Alberta Estonian
Heritage Society

Winter 2010
Issue Number 33

From the Editors' Desk

*'A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer. It sings
because it has a song'*

Chinese Proverb

With the publication of „Freedom, Land, and Legacy: Alberta's Estonians 1899 – 2009, it is clear that we have a song to sing! It is a song about pioneers, adventurers and new comers; it is a song about courage, conflict, achievement, and success. It is a song worth singing, a tribute to our heritage and a reminder that our small group has a long history in this province. The book also reveals that while not always singing in unison, all had a role in an amazing performance. Our book adds another act to this production and we hope the show will go on!

The book is not „singing because it has an answer“, meaning, a definitive account of the past 110 years. It is singing because we have completed a beautiful book based on the invaluable, collective contributions of AEHS members and friends who treasure history and seek to preserve it. Although this history is not complete and never will be, it fits with Ghandi's thought that „whatever you do may be insignificant but it is very important that you do it“. Fifty years have passed since the Central Estonian Historical Commission from Toronto wrote about pre-WW II Alberta Estonians. It was time to put on record the dramatic story of the next fifty years while the ranks of those involved are still able to do so.

The book covers Alberta's major Estonian settlements and events during the past 110 years. Regional voices and histories have been preserved for future generations. Scores of AEHS members contributed materials and effort toward this legacy project. Current and future contributions have a home at the Provincial Archives of Alberta, the primary home of Alberta's history. It is hoped the book provides readers with appreciation of the past and a deeper connection to their heritage. It is a book about who we were and who we have become.

We thank all of you who took time to contribute articles for this issue! Without your support the newsletter could not happen. Your comments, feedback and articles are always welcome.

Best wishes to our readers for a wonderful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Eda McClung and Dave Kiil

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Late News!

**Peter Pastewka has been
appointed Honorary
Consul to the Republic of
Estonia in Alberta.**

**Helgi Leesment has been
recognized by the Estonian
Government as a
'promoter of Public
Diplomacy' for actively
maintaining Estonian
culture abroad.**

Please visit www.aehs.ca for
details

Presidents Message

Tere!



Good fortune is the product of opportunity, talent and effort. That could be one way to explain the good fortune that the AEHS has enjoyed since its inception in 2005. The events documented in our recently released book 'Freedom, Land, & Legacy: Alberta's Estonians 1899 - 2009' would support that theory well. Considering the overwhelming technological advancements that have transpired over the last century it's sometimes easy to forget that accomplishments are still based on a desire to succeed. Desire spawns drive and creativity. Drive and creativity leverage opportunity.

Our book team expended so much energy on meeting the deadline that I don't know how they had breath left to utter its lengthy title. Regardless of its length, the title is descriptive of our past and symbolic of who we are. Our ancestors desired freedom. They found land, built homes, and we inherited a homeland. We have witnessed the evolution of heritage of 110 years, and AEHS has made commitment to preserve this legacy.

Reading the lines in the book or in some cases reading between the lines, it's not hard to see that the emotional aspects of life existed with as much exuberance back then as they do today. In some cases more character comes to life from this history than anything found in today's reality shows. The human content brings out our heritage in full 3D, and as a bonus, no special glasses are required.

Last winter we stood with collective pride as our flag waved over the Vancouver Olympics. That majestic symbol of freedom brought a lump to our throat and a tear to our eye. But it was not the flag that raised us. It was we who raised the flag. A flag needs a well-anchored pole to bear it. Our heritage project series has helped us understand how our collective complex layers of history have wrought a culture bound with strength, energy and passion.

While words are an abstraction, in practical terms I can site positive examples of their influence. For instance, a family member initially presumed that the hardships that came their way resulted from their ancestry. Through involvement with the AEHS, they came to appreciate the unyielding strength and determination of a courageous family member from a preceding generation who set a benchmark they now celebrate and aspire to emulate.

We have our capable book team to applaud for extending our legacy. We must also acknowledge the foresight of earlier 'amateur' historians who researched and documented components of our past which would otherwise have been lost. We owe them immensely for their efforts. This issue of Ajakaja continues to add perspective to our Society and once again we thank the Editors and contributors for their work.

As always, we must continue to look forward, determine aspirations of the next generation and nurture their involvement. Today the torch burns more brightly than we ever imagined. May our good fortune keep it fueled!

Bob Kingsep



Peter Pastewka, Q.C.
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Calgary, Alberta
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Telephone: (403) 206-3052 Fax: (403) 265-7335

Hello Estonians in Alberta:

My name is Peter Pastewka and I am the newly appointed Honorary Consul to the Republic of Estonia in Alberta.

My first task is to reach out to as many Estonian Albertans as possible and establish a communication link. I would like to thank the Alberta Estonian Heritage Society for their help in sending this message to all of you. However, due to privacy concerns, the Society will not provide me with a list of emails or other information. I need to build my own contact list. So, for now, if you would like to be included in any communications that might issue from my office, **I would appreciate if you would send to me your name(s) and email address if you have one. Please send your regular mail address if you do not use email.**

This can be sent to peter.pastewka@janefamilyfoods.com or the address below. All information will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be used for communications from my office to you.

For your information, I reside in Calgary and maintain a form of office in downtown Calgary. I do not have regular office hours, but rather, have the ability to schedule meetings on an 'as required' basis. The office address and phone number is:

Honorary Consul for the Republic of Estonia
2900, First Canadian Centre
350 – 7th Ave SW
Calgary, Alberta, T2P 3N9

Office phone: 403.206.3052
Cell phone: 403.470.8521

By way of background, I was born and raised in Edmonton many, many years ago. I came to Calgary in 1976 and have resided here since. My mother is Estonian. My wife's parents are Estonian. I am a lawyer by profession. I am not able to speak Estonian. My wife has a much better grasp of the language than me.

If you have the need for consular services, your first contact person will continue to be Mr. Riho Kruuv (embassy.ottawa@mfa.ee phone: 1.613.789.4222), the Estonian Charge d'Affaires for Canada located in Ottawa. Mr. Kruuv can provide me with instructions to help out as may be required.

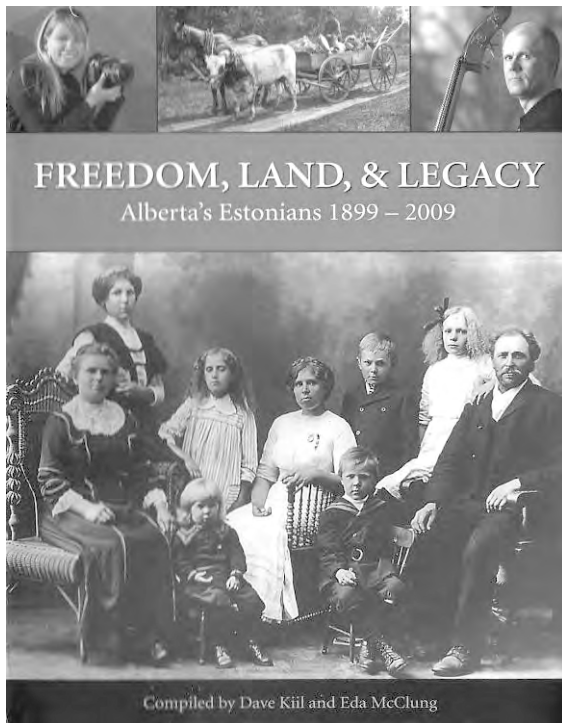
I hope to be able to meet with many of you in the years to come and look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Pastewka (December 7, 2010)

Book Release

Freedom, Land, & Legacy:

Alberta's Estonians 1899-2009



The history of Alberta's Estonians dates back to 1899 and the arrival of two brothers looking for freedom, land, and a place to catch fish. It's a story of pioneers and refugees, adventurers and scholars; a story of courage, renewal, and assimilation; a story of success.

The book is the culmination of a heritage project of the Alberta Estonian Heritage Society. The seeds for this ambitious initiative were planted by Estonian President Lennart Meri during his visit to Alberta in 2000. His imagination was caught up by the story of Alberta's adventurous pioneers who braved hardships to find a new life. He suggested that "we have done very little to try to discover the recorded history of Estonians abroad. So with your help and interest...we will move forward."

The selections presented in the book tell the story about pioneers and refugees from Estonia and their collective efforts to establish themselves in Alberta. They tell stories about individuals and families facing a new life in their adopted homeland. Finally, they also tell stories about communities they helped to build and efforts to preserve their cultural heritage through enterprise, music and community celebrations.

A Project of the Alberta Estonian Heritage Society The book is organized into two parts. Part One highlights the legacy of the early pioneers. Part Two documents the history of post World War II immigrants and extends to present-day activities and achievements. The book is richly illustrated with over 200 photos, tables and maps covering the 110-year history of Alberta's Estonian community.

For the first time, an English translation is available of earlier articles about the history of Alberta's Estonians. This fascinating story is of interest to descendants of pioneers as well as a worldwide audience.

Mail orders

This 304-page, richly illustrated book is now available for sale at \$40.00/copy.

***Shipping and handling: Canada & USA: \$14.00 CDN/US (for up to 3 copies);
Estonia: \$18.00 CDN (each copy).***

Mail Order Form and instructions are posted on AEHS website: www.aehs.ca

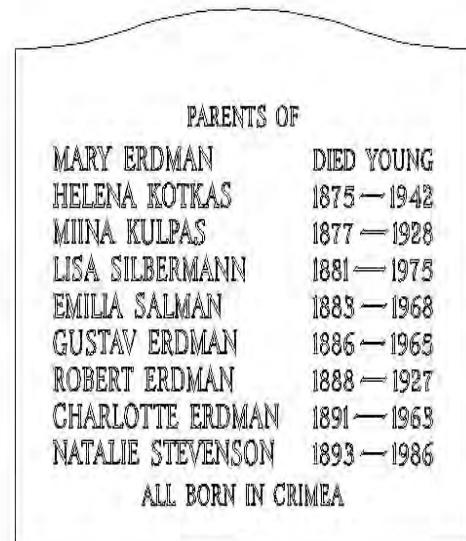
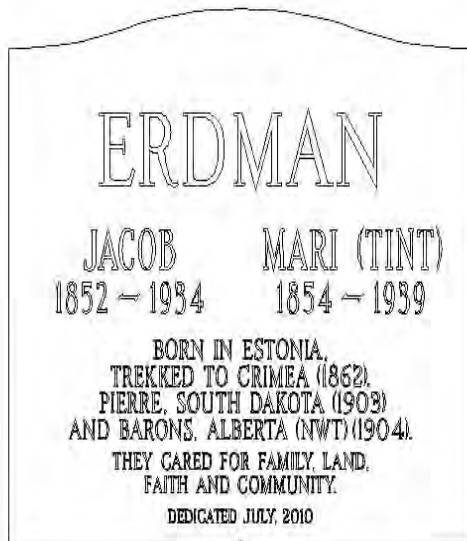
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Dedication of headstone: Jacob and Mari Erdman

Lillian Munz and Martha Munz Gue



July 10, 2010. A grey granite headstone was dedicated at the cemetery in Barons, Alberta, to honour the memory of Jacob and Mari Erdman and

their nine children.

Thirty-eight descendants generously contributed to the purchase and installation of this stone. This project was facilitated by Jacob and Mari's great granddaughter, Martha Munz Gue of Medicine Hat. Many descendants gathered at the cemetery at noon for the dedication. Barons became a village 100 years ago. This was weekend of celebrations with hundreds of people taking part in various activities. In 2004 we celebrated the Barons 2004 Homesteading Centennial. Our ancestors were among the original homesteaders of this area. Their story involved three long and challenging journeys.

Jacob and Mari were eight and ten years old in 1862 when they and their parents left Estonia which was governed by the Tsar of Russia and where land was divided into German baronial estates. After getting various permissions, a group with over 70 families walked with their wagons full of possessions and with some of their animals for three months southward to the shores of the Black Sea. They settled in Targhan, Crimea, where at last farmers could actually own their land. In Estonia they were serfs for German landlords. Jacob's parents were among the many Estonians who died within the first difficult years in Crimea so he and his brother Siim were raised by his aunt and uncle, Madli and Otto Sessler.



Mari and Jacob Erdman, 1913

About ten years later Jacob and Mari married. They had nine children and were very successful farmers in that Estonian settlement near the Black Sea. There was a school and a Lutheran church in each Estonian village. In 1903 when political unrest swept through Crimea and conscription into the Tsar's army was inevitable, the Erdmans made a very difficult decision to sell their farm and emigrate to America. Jacob and Mari were in their fifties by then. With seven of their nine children, they took the train north to Estonia, a boat across the sea to England and then sailed from Southampton, arriving at Ellis Island, New York, on July 4, 1903. Anton Kulpas, who had married Miina Erdman and had an infant son in Crimea, accompanied the Erdmans. Anton's parents also were in this group of Estonian immigrants.



Emilia, Helena, Jacob with Charlotte, Miina, Robert, Mari with Natalie, Lisa, Gus, Crimea, 1894

They spent much of the first year staying with other Estonian settlers in Pierre, South Dakota. That same year Jacob and Gus Erdman, Anton Kulpas, Mr. Kivi, and Mr. Lentsman headed west to scout for homestead land. They eventually found the rich prairies with grass as high as a horse's belly, north of Lethbridge, NWT, to be available. They filed for homesteads and returned to Dakota to pack their families and possessions into boxcars in a settlers' train.

The train brought the families to Lethbridge and they made their way 30 miles north to the flat treeless prairie which was to be soon developed into grain farms. The Erdmans built a small house west of what is now Barons. Their two youngest children were ten and thirteen years old when they settled on the homestead.

Three of their children, Gus (and Magda Liik), Helena (and Jaan Kotkas) and Lisa (and Martin Silbermann) soon married and remained in Barons to raise their

families. Miina and Anton Kulpas emigrated to Oregon with their family. One of Jacob's daughters, Charlotte, never married and worked for her church. Natalie graduated from the University of Alberta in 1917, taught for a few years and then became a missionary in Iraq where she married Keith Stevenson, an Australian missionary. Robert remained single and died relatively young in Barons. Emilia had married Jaan Salman in Crimea before her parents emigrated. She remained in Crimea and raised a family of six children there.

Jacob and Mari lived on their farm near Barons for 30 years until their deaths in 1934 and 1939. They have over 150 descendants most of whom live in western Canada and United States. Several of their descendants still live in the Barons area.

We were honoured to gather at this cemetery just one mile from their original homestead to dedicate this gravestone. We, their great grandchildren, with our families, respect the sacrifice and courage that brought our ancestors to this prairie land so many years ago.

Lillian Munz and Martha Munz Gue are grand-daughters of Lisa (Erdman) Silbermann (1881-1975)



Painting "Home Sweet Home" by Lillian Munz, 2010

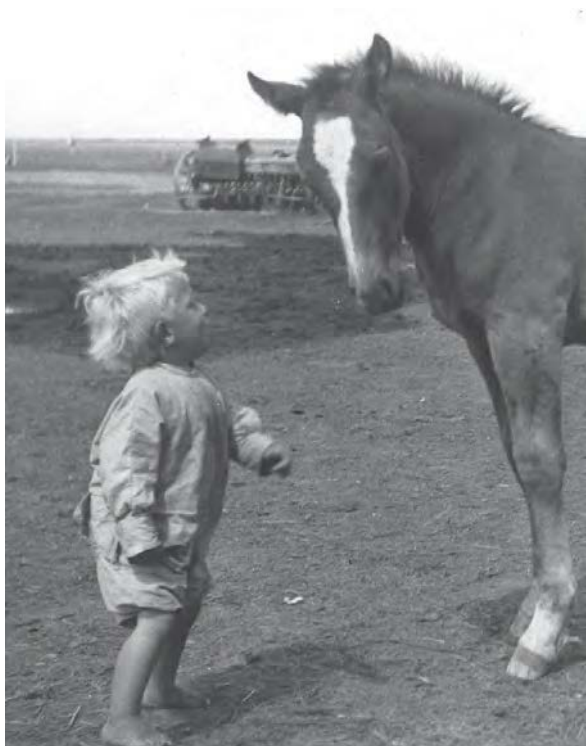
The cemetery land was provided for family members and Finns in 1905 by Jacob Erdman. In 1923 it was donated to the village of Barons. Dozens of pioneers are buried there in unmarked graves. The iron gate was installed in 2004. The trees were donated by Ralph Erdman's estate.

In Memoriam Dr. Oscar E. Erdman, P.Geol., CSPG Honourary Member

Perry Kotkas, P.Geoph

(Article from the Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists' publication, the RESERVOIR.)

Friend. Boss. Mentor. Oil Finder. Grandfather. Father. Husband. Oscar Erdman, born of Estonian-Canadian parents in Barons, Alberta, was all of these things and, of course much more. He was one of the early geologists to work in Alberta, when summers meant horses, tents, campfire-cooking and measuring geological section in the mountains on foot. Oscar's career continued through the glory days of Canadian exploration - literally from coast to coast to coast, and offshore.



Three-year-old Oscar Erdman on the farm in Barons

Celebration of Life was the appropriate term as the large attendance of family, friends, colleagues and former staff attended the memorial for and celebrated the life of Dr. Oscar Erdman, P.Geol. on August 17th in Calgary. Oscar was a highly-celebrated geologist and Canadian Society of Professional Geologists (CSPG) **Honourary Member**, who passed away in Calgary on July 27, 2010 at the age of 95 years. Oscar is survived by his wife of 60 years (Sally), his daughter (Elizabeth) and sons (Ron and Ken) and six grandchildren.

Oscar graduated with B.Sc and M.Sc degrees in Geology from the University of Alberta in 1941, and a

PhD in Geology from the University of Chicago in 1946. He trained and mentored many young geoscientists during his career of 32 years with Gulf Canada and maintained an active interest in geoscience literally up until his passing last summer. Just a few weeks before his passing, Oscar had given the author a recent copy of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG) magazine depicting advances in geology and geophysics, mentioning that both sciences certainly needed to be practiced together, didn't they....' We had spent the afternoon with a few relatives, including a current M.Sc. Earth Science student (Anita Gue) discussing geology and looking at photos of his early days in the Rocky Mountains of Alberta doing fieldwork for the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) and Gulf.

Oscar was born in 1915, into an Estonian immigrant farming family near Barons, in southern Alberta. His early education on the farm and in a small village during the Great Depression of the 1930's gave him the basic ethical and practical knowledge that would be fundamental to his distinguished career as a geoscientist in Canada. Oscar's university education was punctuated by stints back on the farm due to lack of funds. University in Chicago was necessary at the time to enable Oscar to pursue his education in petroleum and structural geology (authors note: Oscar was proud of the advances in geoscience education in Canada, especially in Calgary and Edmonton, since his days in university, and "it is a lot closer to home now.")

Oscar worked for the Geological Survey of Canada during WWII, as part of the war effort. An interesting note is that his first field work, in 1941, was for the Alberta Research Council, working on a geological field party in the Nordegg area, at wages of \$2.85 per day, cooking over an open fire – transport by horses of course. Geological field work during the war years was deemed critical to the war effort; the search was mostly for coal and oil. According to Pearson & McMillan (Professional Excellence, Honourary Membership article, Bulletin of Canadian Petroleum Geology, Dec. 1993): "In 1943 Oscar moved to Ottawa and was employed by the GSC specializing in structural geology and stratigraphy as they relate to coal and petroleum prospecting in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies. Perhaps the most notable contribution of field mapping and five reports was his involvement in the interpretation of folded thrust faults in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies.

In 1946, Oscar was hired by „Canadian Gulf Oil Company“ – one of the two first geologists hired by Gulf in Canada. His career of 32 years as Chief Geologist, Exploration Manager and Senior Exploration Advisor encompassed Gulf’s major exploration efforts in Canada, including notable fields such as Pincher Creek, Redwater, Stettler-Big Valley, Leduc fields, and exploration from East Coast offshore to Georgia Strait and north to the Beaufort Sea. Again, to quote Pearson and McMillan: “by far more important than his technical achievements was his influence on exploration strategies. His quiet, sage-like, inspirational, and harmonious leadership produced scores of highly qualified explorationists. His advice was sought and always appreciated. When geologists, geophysicists, and engineers met, with Dr. Erdman’s cooperation, efficiency invariably resulted.”



Gus and Oscar Erdman, Calgary, 1951

An interesting story – Oscar of course „sat“ many wells back in the day; he barely avoided sitting a particular well in 1950... and instead had time to marry his bride Sally Cuthbert, in Christ Church in Calgary. (Sixty plus years later, Oscar’s memorial service was held in that same church). In an article of the Petroleum History Society, Oscar remarked that “the night before our wedding I had to remind my boss that I couldn’t leave to sit the well in the Stettler area...so he went instead.”

Another story dear to the author’s heart – back in 1967 I had heard about geology at a career fair in high

school in Lethbridge, but didn’t know much about the science. My parents advised we meet with “Uncle” Oscar who was a big-time geologist in Calgary (Chief Geologist for Gulf Canada at the time). Oscar invited my mother and me to lunch in the grand dining room in the Palliser Hotel and thrilled me with stories about the oil patch. I shall always remember that day and the grandeur of that dining room – quite a day for a farm-kid from Barons. I followed his footsteps (but went to the „darkside“ of geophysics...☺) and my son, nephew and great nephew are all in the business now. Oscar had more impact on our family than he knows – although I was able to relate that story to him a few weeks before his passing.

Oscar joined the CSPG in 1946 and APEGGA in 1947, was active in the AAPG, the Petroleum History Society and a director of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy. He served on the APEGGA Council. Oscar was awarded Honourary Membership in the CSPG in 1992; he’d been a CSPG member for *sixty-four years* at the time of his passing....

Oscar was active as a geologist for another twenty-five years after his retirement...until the age of 87. He was always helpful, inquisitive and had a very sharp mind right up to his passing. His memoirs include reference to prices for gas at 10 cents/mcf and oil at \$1.00/bbl. Imagine a career that spanned the decades from the 1940’s -requiring surface geology extrapolation into the subsurface (*because there was no well control*) to 2002, where geoscience computer workstations were commonplace and well control was...abundant. What changes he saw...,...and helped make happen!

Oscar and Sally enjoyed travelling, especially to visit family and friends. Their travels included several cruises. On one particular cruise to the eastern Mediterranean in later years, they had the opportunity to visit and picnic with family members they’d of course never met - including a relative Sergei Kotkas ... who had a striking resemblance to the author. (Oscar’s father and my grandmother were siblings.) Oscar and Sally were instrumental in connecting many family members from North America to those in Estonia and Crimea.

Oscar and Sally were of course also active in and great supporters of the Calgary community, family activities and their church. They were able to spend many times with their family in Vancouver, Calgary and elsewhere. His memorial service allowed many of us whom he had mentored to say goodbye, and „thank-you“ – and to recognize a career in geology that was so distinguished and exhibited professional excellence for so many, many years.

Oscar AE. Erdman: B.Sc., M.Sc., PhD Geology, CSPG Honourary Member. 1915 -2010. We honor you.

Oscar Erdman

95 Wonderful Years

Lillian Munz

Oscar Erdman, the last of the 26 grandchildren of



Mari and Jakob Erdman, died on July 27, 2010 in Calgary. His grandparents and seven of their nine children emigrated from Crimea and homesteaded in Barons in 1904. Their son Gustav had settled in Barons with his parents. In 1908 Gus's fiancée Magda

Liik arrived after a long journey by train and ship from Crimea. Gus and Magda were married by Pastor Sillak, the travelling Estonian Lutheran from Medicine Hat. Over the next nine years, six children were born: Victor, Ralph, Oscar, Alfred, Ellen and Mary. A larger house was needed so in 1917 Gustav ordered the materials from the Eaton's catalogue. This heritage house, Oscar's childhood home, still stands in good condition north of Barons.

When Oscar started school, he spoke only Estonian, but soon he was fluent in English.

Many Estonian families farmed in the district so several of his school mates shared a similar heritage. During the depression years students could not attend school on a regular basis because they had to help out with the horses, with seeding, harvesting and other chores on the family farms. Oscar graduated from high school in 1931 receiving the Governor General's Award for the highest grade 12 marks in southern Alberta. Education was important to the Erdmans, so several in the family made university their goal, taking on extra jobs to make enough money for expenses.

During the great depression, Oscar travelled to Edmonton 500 kms away to study geology at the University of Alberta. Oscar's brother Ralph had received his MSc in agriculture there in 1938. After graduating with a Master's degree in geology in 1941, Oscar studied at the University of Chicago for his doctorate in geology which he received in 1946. From 1942 to 1946 he worked during the summers for the federal government doing geological survey work as a wartime technologist specializing in structural, stratigraphic petroleum and coal geology, preparing maps and reports that were

vital to the oil business which was in its early years of development in our province. His survey crew roughed it, sleeping in tents, and travelling with pack horses. The crew scrambled over the rocks in the Alberta foothills to prepare geological maps some of which are used today. In 1946 Oscar began work for Gulf Oil Canada in Calgary, remaining with this company for 32 years until 1978. He was chief geologist, manager of geology and manager



Gus, Magda and their six children, 1921. Oscar is in front wearing a hat

of exploration at different times over three decades and continued with consulting work until recent years. Many younger geologists in Calgary benefited from Oscar's mentoring, enthusiasm and keen interest in that profession. Perry Kotkas of Calgary, recalls *"Back in 1967, while I was in high school, Oscar convinced me to become a geoscientist. My son is in the business now as a seismic data broker. My nephew is a geologist and my great nephew is a geophysicist. Oscar had an influence on quite a line of Kotkas family folks."* In 1993, Oscar was elected honorary member of the Society of Canadian Geologists.

Oscar met Sally Cuthbert from Fort Macleod on a ski trip to Banff and the couple were married in 1950 in Calgary at Christ Church Anglican. They celebrated their wedding anniversary on May 6, 2010. Their children, Ron, Ken and Elizabeth each have two children. Keeping up with the computer age, at the seniors' lodge where Oscar and Sally lived, Oscar was sending e-mails very recently to his grandchildren. Oscar and Sally attended the many Erdman family reunions first

inspired by his sister Ellen Johnson in Barons. The family has shown keen interest in the branches of the Erdman clan comprised of over 150 descendants of Mari and Jacob in western Canada and the United States. In 1998 Oscar and Sally visited a group of Erdman/Salman relatives who gathered dock-side at Yalta, Crimea, when the Erdmans were on a Mediterranean cruise. This emotional occasion was the first meeting between the Canadian and Crimean branches of the family. Oscar's aunt Emilia had married an Estonian and remained in Crimea when her parents and seven siblings emigrated in 1903. Over forty descendants of Emilia and Jaan Salman were born in Crimea near the Black Sea over the span of one hundred years.

At Oscar's funeral on August 17, about three dozen relatives were among the many guests who will remember him as a man with a fine sense of humour, a generous spirit, a sharp mind, a capacity for many interests and a love for family and many friends. He truly will be greatly missed.



Four relatives in the "Erdman clan" during a visit with Oscar Erdman in Calgary, April, 2010. Left to right: Lillian Munz, teacher; Perry Kotkas, geophysicist; Oscar Erdman, geologist; Anita Gue, hydro geologist. "Oscar was a great story teller that day".

Barons 2010 100th Year Celebration

July 9 – 11, 2010, Barons, Alberta

Barbara Gullickson

After 2 ½ years of preparation – it finally happened. Barons was celebrating 100 years of incorporation as a Village!

Plans were in place for parking, restricted parking, registration, Friday Street Dance, Pancake Breakfast, Parade, Gazebo Entertainment, Show & Shine Car Show, Beer Garden, Out House Race, displays (Historical, Heritage Quilt, Market Garden, School), Beef Dinner and Dance, Worship Service and Chili Cook-off. A Guided Village Tour and a Cemetery Tour were also arranged. And these were just the organizing seen by the people.

Special guests were invited. His Honour, Colonel (Ret'd) The Honourable Donald S. Ethell, O.C., O.M.M., A.O.E., M.S.C., C.D., Lieutenant Governor of Alberta and his wife, Her Honour, Mrs. Linda Ethell, graciously consented to attend the dinner and to speak during the Opening Ceremonies.



Their Honours in the back seat; official hosts, Roy & Barbara Gullickson in front seat of the 1918 Dodge. (frame-up restoration by Roy; part of this car belonged to his grandfather who bought it in 1918.)

MLA Barry McFarland and his wife, Mary; County of Lethbridge Councilor Hans Rutz and wife, Margaret; Reeve Lorne Hickey; Mayor of Barons, Ron Gorzitza and wife, Olive; MC Perry Kotkas and wife, Karen were guests at the Head Table.

Arrangements were made for our local centenarian, Jay Murray, and his wife, Ida, to ride in the Parade in Roy Gullickson's 1918 Dodge.



Ida and Jay Murray

Another centenarian who had a connection with Barons was Edgar Dunning, the son of the publisher of the Barons Globe in 1920-21. He lived here at that time and offered to talk a little about his life here. An interesting man – he was involved in the media business all his life and still wrote a column for a Delta, BC, newspaper.



When I was talking with him on the phone, I thought I would impress him – and told him that the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta would be present. He said, 'Very nice. I'm going to Toronto to have tea with the Queen!' And he did!

Left: Edgar Dunning. Mr. Dunning passed away in October, 2010

When this story was told during the speeches, His Honour, Donald Ethell, was heard to mutter, 'I don't mind being up-staged by the Queen!'

Attendance was phenomenal. We have no data for the people who were there on Saturday, but the streets were full of people.



The flag bearers during the Parade

There were 100 entries in the Parade. We are grateful to surrounding towns and villages for their floats, as well as all the personal cars and trucks, tractors, and bicycles which made the parade such a success.



Tom & Anne Marie Erdman's entry in the Parade; daughter Raphaëlle playing the violin

Martha Munz Gue organized the Celebration Choir. This photo shows them in the Gazebo on Main Street on Saturday afternoon.



The Out House Race was held Saturday afternoon, with 3 entries: Cammy Pariseau & family, the Gue Crew and Christopher Gullickson & crew.



The Gue entry



Christopher & crew

The Beef Dinner was sold out – latecomers were sold dinners, but they had to find seating somewhere else.



The Head Table- L to R: Ron Gorzitza, Karen Kotkas, Roy Gullickson, Their Honours, Mr. & Mrs. Ethell, Mary and Barry McFarland, Perry Kotkas (standing behind), Susan Darlington & father Edgar Dunning, Margaret and Hans Rutz, Celebration Choir on the stage.

The dancers said the dance band was outstanding. However, there were a FEW of us who thought the music was much too loud!

The interdenominational Worship Service on Sunday was well done, with the Celebration Choir providing leadership in singing the hymns. The Pastor, Allan Calvin, had an easy disposition, and handled the curves thrown at him very well.

The Service was followed by a Chili Cook-off. Six chefs prepared chili for the title of 'Best Chili' as determined by the luncheon crowd.

Barons residents, former residents, relatives, friends and strangers met and talked and enjoyed themselves. It was an outstanding weekend!



By the time this photo was taken, a few people had already left. The families in the photo are: Erdman, Silverton, Larson, Row, Downie, Kotkas, Pocock, Myson, Munz, Gue, Marshall, Gullickson and Johnson

Kivisild: English translation ‘Stone Bridge’

A suitable name for a family linking Estonia and Alberta

Livia Kivisild, Calgary

My husband Hans Kivisild and I moved to Calgary in 1973, and Hans worked as an engineer in the oil and gas industry. He had been appointed Vice President and Manager for the Western Region for FENCO – Foundation of Canada Engineering Corporation. He was also responsible for offices in Vancouver, Edmonton and Saskatoon. The office in Vancouver had been established in the 1950's and served to manage the construction of Massey Tunnel under the Fraser River as well as extensive building of highways and bridges in the BC interior. In the 1970's, however, the focus was on Arctic oil and Calgary was, and remains, the Canadian Centre for this industry.

Already in 1970 Kivisild's suggestion for building ice platforms to carry drilling rigs was adopted by Panarctic Oil. The first engineered sea ice road was developed in James Bay along with a year-round marine oil terminal on the St. Lawrence River. The first bulk terminal in Arctic Ice, Hudson Strait, soon followed.

In 1975, Hans became Vice President of Lavalin Inc. While in charge of operations in Alberta and Western Canada, Hans continued his international career. In the 1980's the company was retained to design water supply systems for several islands in Indonesia. With Canadian staff posted in Jakarta and the island of Lombok to conduct the work, Hans took a number of trips to supervise this project. When Hans left Lavalin in 1987, he founded HRK Consulting Inc. that took

on a variety of projects. These included designing pillars to withstand currents and ice floes for the Great Belt Link, an 18 km causeway in Denmark linking Copenhagen to the European mainland. HRK Consulting was dissolved in 1999.

In retirement, Hans and I joined Canadian Executive Services Overseas (CESO), a volunteer charitable organization to help developing countries. We were asked to serve in Estonia, where Hans was member



*Livia and Hans Kivisild
in Paldiski, 1997*

of a team that developed a new curriculum for the Estonian Maritime Academy. Later, he was

instrumental in converting the former Soviet nuclear submarine base at Paldiski to a civilian commercial and passenger terminal.



*Livia and Hans Kivisild at the Estonian Maritime
Academy*

Hans was active in engineering and science organizations such as the Engin-

engineering Institute of Canada; chairman of the 1987 Centennial Celebrations in Calgary; head of the Honors and Awards Committee of the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta (APEGGA) for several years; member of the Snow and Ice Committee of the National Research Council and member of the Rules and Regulations Committee of the Canadian Standards Association.

He was also honored with a number of awards over the years. Among them are:

- 1976 - Engineering Medal of the APEO (Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario).
- 1977 - Her Majesty the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal
- 1985 – Ernest C. Manning Award of Merit
- 1987 - Government of Alberta Achievement Award of Excellence



Livia Kivisild teaching English to staff of Estonian Maritime Academy in Tallinn

Over the years I have always been active in volunteer community services and fund raising for charitable causes. For many years I was a member and then president of the Women's League of the Calgary Philharmonic Society. This involved the

annual Benny the Bookworm sale of second-hand books, sheet music and records. At the same time, the Women's League together with orchestra members ran an annual music competition for young musicians that provided scholarships for the winners.

Always interested in languages, I was principal of the Calgary German Language School for ten years, and served as president of the Southern Alberta Heritage Language Association (SAHLA), an umbrella organization for community-based language schools involving instruction in 47 different languages.

I spent two years as a volunteer for the 1988 Olympic Winter Games in Calgary, helping to run the Olympic Centre in downtown Calgary before the games, and as a member of the Language Services Team during the games.

Our two youngest daughters of four lived with us in Calgary before going to the United States to attend university. They now live in California, Chicago, Houston, Texas and Vancouver, BC. We have ten grandchildren and three great grandchildren, all of whom visit Calgary and Estonia regularly.

The Kivisild family shares a love of music at home and in performance. We also all have an interest in sports. Tennis has added much enjoyment to life wherever the Kivisilds have been. Hans was a competitive swimmer in his youth and all his children participated in age-group swimming. One of our grandchildren – Matt Smith – competed as a member of the Estonian National Swim Team at the World Championships in Rome in 2009.

Adam and Anna Matteus (Matthews): The Quest for a New Life

Pioneers to the Medicine Valley from Võru, Estonia

Shirley (Matthews) Dinning

Photos by Alice Gunderson and Iona (Matthews) Oja

(Note: Many of the pioneers to the Medicine Valley came from the Võru region of southern Estonia. These included the Kingsep, Kinna, Langer, Moro, Mottus, Pihooja, Posti and Raabis families).



Adam and Anna Matteus (Matthews), 1932

Adam (b.1872) and Anna (b. 1880) Matthews were early pioneers to the Eckville district, homesteading in the Medicine Valley in 1905. Their lives began in Kärjala district, Võrumaa. Anna's father was a government forest warden who was clubbed and robbed while delivering a payroll, leaving his wife Maria (Sonnatar) a widow with five daughters and a son. Maria was entitled to receive four years of education and thus learned to read and write, a status attained by few women in those times. Anna was raised in a foster family but visited her own family on weekends. She received four winters of

schooling, learned to read and write, and do arithmetic.



Great Grandfather Mikk Sonnatar was a coachman at the Varbuse Estate which is now a Museum

Adam, the oldest son of a land owner, stood to inherit land. He had an education, could read and write, and was drawn to courting Anna. She was 17 years old when they married and they joined his crowded family home that sheltered five other families. She found it difficult to adjust to this crowded life. After just three months of marriage, she was left to fend for herself when Adam did mandatory service in the Russian army for two years. She was a tiny woman, only four feet, ten inches but courageous and determined. Their first son August was born December 26, 1900 and another son Elmer was born September 23, 1903. Rumors of Russia's preparations for war were a deciding factor in Adam's decision to emigrate to the Medicine Valley district.

Adam had been corresponding with his good friend Henry Kingsep who came to Alberta in 1899. He told Adam that homestead land was available for 10 dollars for 160 acres if improvements were made. In 1905, Adam, Anna and their two sons, as well as Adam's sister Leena, her husband August Pihooja and daughter Hilda made the rough, ocean crossing. Land was a welcome sight. Setting foot on Canadian soil was a boost to their spirits and their hopes ran high as they crossed the vast continent by train to Red Deer, the end of steel. They were fascinated

by the vast tracts of empty land, so different from Estonia, where a small plot was like a pot of gold.



Adam Matteus farm in Võru, now owned by the Maki family

They were met by Henry Kingsep who had hired an ox cart and took them along barely marked trails the 40 miles to his home beside the Medicine River. That is where they spent the first winter. In Adam's trunk were tools: a broad axe, double bit axe, a two- man saw and a hammer. That winter he made handles for these tools. In the spring, he filed for a homestead in the Gilby district and together they built a one room log house. In that fresh rich soil, their garden grew well, they had vegetables to store for winter and a barrel of sauerkraut provided for the cold months ahead. The cabin had a sod roof, earthen floor and a stove made of rocks plastered with clay; beds had mattress bags stuffed with hay. Rabbits, grouse and prairie chickens were plentiful, as were coyotes that preyed on Anna's chickens. To Adam and Anna, this was luxury, a home of their own.

As the number of animals increased, so did the size of the family with six more children arriving between 1907 and 1922. All six births took place at home and without a doctor present. In 1910, with many more mouths to feed, Adam bought a quarter section of land with the Medicine River winding through it. Another house was built, this time a three room log dwelling which provided for the family until after World War I. Travelling between the two homes and carting the little ones meant both hardship and heartache for Anna. There were still no roads, no real bridges, just wilderness and rich soil waiting to be broken and cultivated.

The Estonian immigrants to the area settled mainly along the Medicine River and it was a close knit, cooperative settlement. Working hand in hand, their accomplishments were many. Education was a top priority. Carl Langer donated land for the first school and through collective effort, a school house named Estonian School was built in 1910. So intense was interest in education that a pact was made that each family should try to educate one child as a teacher. Their commitment was outstanding. Six of the founding families did produce a teaching member, among them August, the first born son of Adam and Anna. After August became a teacher, he changed the Biblical name 'Matteus' from Estonian spelling to 'Matthews'. After that the growing family was known as the Matthews family.



Urvaste Church where Adam Matteus and Anna Sonnatar married on October 24, 1899. Sons August and Elmer were christened here

In 1920, Adam went to Nordegg to work in a coal mine. With money earned, he was able to build a permanent two story home from lumber with a full basement. It was finished in time for the arrival of their youngest child, Robert, born in 1922. All of the Matthews family were ill but survived the flu epidemic of 1918.

But the strains of work and the Great Depression took a toll and Anna passed away in 1935 at age 55. She was laid to rest in the Gilby Kalmu Cemetery. Adam remained a widower and lived his remaining years with youngest son Robert in Eckville. In 1949, he passed away at the age of 78. He was buried beside Anna in the Gilby Kalmu Cemetery where so many brave and courageous pioneers rest.

Growing up on the homestead

A story about Magnus Tipman family

Bob Tipman and Marlene (Tipman) Kuutan

In Estonia in the 1880's land ownership for the Estonian people was virtually nonexistent so when they heard of other opportunities many families decided to move. One who hoped to find a new life was Mikhel Tipman whose family consisted of one girl, Lena, and three boys, Josep, Johan and Magnus, the youngest, who was born in 1864. The family left the Pärnu area around 1885 and migrated to Nurmekunde in Russia. Homesteads were to have been given away free by the overlord but somehow the papers were lost and in order to obtain land, the settlers were required to pay. The land was poor quality, mostly bush, difficult to farm and the levy caused significant hardship to the settlers. Nevertheless, by the late 1880's, about 300 Estonians had settled in the area.

In the early 1890's, the community was also faced with the Czarist policy of Russification which was an attempt to assimilate the immigrant population. It included conscription into the Russian army which was very contrary to the beliefs of the pacifist Estonians. When word reached the settlement that 160 acres of land was available in America for ten dollars, along with freedom of religion and freedom of speech, a large portion of the community decided to relocate. In the early 1900's all three brothers, Johan, Josep and Magnus and their families came to Canada. Lena stayed behind and contact with her was lost.

While in Nurmekunde, Magnus married Viiu Rahu who was born in Karma, a village close to Kuressaare on the island of Saaremaa. Magnus and Viiu, with their four children Louise, John, Mary and Mike, sailed from Russia, the trip taking two weeks on an old ship. The train then took them to Red Deer and to Sylvan Lake which was in the Medicine Valley area where they lived with an aunt and uncle (likely Johan) while Magnus worked in the lumber mill for \$1.50 a day and looked for suitable land. By the time they arrived, most of the land in this area had already been homesteaded. Johan was able to get a homestead at Sylvan Lake, but the other brothers had to look elsewhere.

Later in 1904, Magnus Tipman and Mike Kudras went looking for land at Medicine Hat. We believe they took a train from Red Deer to Medicine Hat, but when they got there, they found the prairie soil was dry, of poor quality and barren. It was not what they were looking for, so they bought some food, supplies and rifles so they could live off the land as they walked

back across country looking for land suitable for homesteads. They walked in a north-westerly direction until they came to an area south of Stettler which was much more to their liking. One of the homesteaders already living in the area said that late one evening he was reading in his log cabin when he heard a knock on the door. He opened the door and two very tired, hungry and scruffy looking men who couldn't speak English appeared. When he offered them food, all they wanted was potatoes since for several weeks their only diet had been porcupines, rabbits and any wild berries they could find. The next day the two men continued their walk to Red Deer to record their homesteads and get back to their families. There were other groups that also walked the country looking for suitable homesteads but, eventually, they all considered the Linda Hall area near Stettler to be the most suitable and many of them returned there to claim homesteads.



Magnus Tipman's family, 1914. Back L-R, Mary, John, Mike; front L-R, Ferdie, Viiu, Edward (in lap), Sophie, Louise and Ado

Magnus continued to work in the lumber mill until they were able to secure homesteads in the Stettler area in 1904. Magnus and Mike Kudras and their families were the first to settle in this area. They were soon joined by the families of Johan and Josep Tipman, Klaus, Hennel, Wagenstein, Nicklom, Oro, Kerbes, Asberg, Raho, and other families. In this way the Stettler area was settled.

Magnus' oldest daughter, Louise, describes their journey from Medicine Valley to the Stettler area and their early life on the farm.

"In September, 1904, we moved to our homestead in the Stettler area where Dad had built a large one room cabin with a dirt floor and dirt roof. All our belongings were loaded in a covered wagon which was pulled by two oxen named Eric and Bill. We had a cow and a bull tied to the wagon and a dozen chickens in a crate. Our trip was quite uneventful until we had to cross a creek. The wagon was too heavily laden to use the bridge, so we forded the creek. Half way across, Eric decided to lay down and cool off as it was a very warm day. However, the spot he picked was quite unsuitable and his head couldn't be kept out of the water. Eight year old John went to the rescue by crawling out on the tongue of the wagon and taking hold of the reins, to see if he could pull Eric's head up. No amount of coaxing or swearing could get the oxen up until he was quite ready to do so himself. In all the excitement, Bill quietly stood by and chewed his cud.

We arrived at our destination after three days of travel and settled into our cabin which had a homemade stove made of rocks and clay with a cast iron top and beds made with rails and straw filled mattresses. The fireplace was used to bake bread which was wrapped in cabbage leaves until we acquired pans. As we had no outbuildings at the time, the chickens were kept in the cabin, fenced in under the bed. They kept us in eggs all winter and there was no sleeping in as the rooster crowed regularly at day break. After Dad made sure we were settled in for the winter, he returned to his work at the lumber mill in Red Deer.

Mother and brothers, John and Mike, and myself put up the hay which was cut by hand, loaded on a homemade willow stoneboat and pulled over to the cabin by the bull who was harness broke. In the spring, Dad cultivated five acres of land with the aid of the oxen and seeded it to a mixture of barley, oats and rye. In the fall, this crop was again cut and threshed by hand. The straw was salvaged and used to make a straw roof for the cabin. We also had a small plot for a garden.

To bring in a supply of groceries for the winter was quite an ordeal, as the trip had to be made to Red Deer and took a week to complete. The bob-sled was loaded with hay to feed the oxen and enough food to last Dad had to be packed. As more settlers had moved into the area, each one was called on and a list of supplies taken from each and delivered on his return. The years passed and improvements were made in living and working conditions. The family grew to five sons and three daughters; John, Mike, Ado, Ferdie, Edward, Mary, Sophie and myself. There was no school in the area until 1910 and until then, Dad and Mom helped us with our reading. Dad taught us some German as well. Being a school

teacher was the only occupation to strive for at the time and two brothers, (Ado and Edward) and two sisters (Mary and Sophie) took this step."

By late 1905 a branch of the CPR railway had been completed through the area and the town of Stettler came into being. This alleviated some of the problems obtaining groceries and supplies since trading posts and shops were established. Next year, 1906, a few of the settlers decided to build a small Lutheran Chapel which was presided over by Reverend John Sillak who travelled in from Medicine Hat to perform the services. There was still a need for a place to have social functions, and in 1910, after the agricultural society was formed, plans were made for construction of a community center. John Kerbes donated the land for Linda Hall and Magnus Tipman was part of the group that helped to organize the Linda Hall Society and construct the center which opened in 1911.

In the few years after the railroad was completed, farms were becoming increasingly mechanized. The Estonians believed in the co-operative movement, and equipment was bought individually and shared with other neighbours. The first pieces of equipment purchased were a threshing machine and steam tractor.

Tragically in the fall of 1913, Magnus had an accident



Viiu (Sophia) and daughter Louise Tipman, 1916

while performing maintenance on a threshing machine while it was still running. His leg was crushed and his foot nearly severed in the accident. The threshing crew tied his foot back on with twine, put Magnus into the wagon and drove ten agonizing miles over rough prairie trails to Stettler. A three hour operation failed to save him and he died a few days later. This left the oldest

member of the family, John, age 18 in charge of the family. The youngest member of the family, Edward, was born two months after Magnus' death.

Tragedy again struck the family shortly after Magnus' death when Viiu (her name changed to Sophia) became ill with asthma. As her health deteriorated, she became bedridden and was taken care of by her children. In 1919, the family drained their resources and sent her to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester,

Minnesota for treatment. She returned after several weeks but the treatment was unsuccessful. A year later, in the winter of 1920, she passed away.

During this time the family continued farming on the homestead and rented two partial quarters of land, one from Hans Asberg and the other from Lena Johanson. Louise took the role of mother, making and mending hand-me-downs. John carried on with farming mainly with Mike's help since he was the only other member of the family old enough to run machinery or drive horses. Help from the neighbors, particularly Alex Oro, became very important to their survival. Ado claimed that without their help, the family would have perished.

Magnus, a strong believer in education, helped to organize the Docendo School which opened in 1910. At first, the whole family attended, but the older children, John, Mike and Louise soon dropped out to work on the farm. After their mother's death, Ado, Mary and Sophie remained in school and became teachers, which as the oldest daughter Louise said, "this was the only occupation to strive for at the time". They all attended Normal School in Camrose.

A year after the death of her mother, Louise met and married Hugo Mottus from Eckville and settled into the Gilby area. John continued to farm the homestead while the other members of the family were going to Normal School or already teaching. Edward, who was now eight years old went to live with Louise until he was able to also go to Normal School and later, with the help of his siblings, to attend the University of Alberta where he completed a Master's degree in Chemistry. His marriage to Ruby Gilbertson produced no children. Edward passed away in 1985.

In 1926, John married Anne Posti from Eckville and they continued farming the homestead. By this time, all of the other members of the family had left the farm. In 1930, John purchased additional land near Linda Hall, built a new home and moved there to raise his family. For a time, he continued to farm the homestead but later this was rented to Alex Oro and then purchased by Ado. John passed away in 1979.

Mike, who never married, died of Bright's disease in 1945 at the age of 47.

Ado, who graduated from Normal School in 1925, took his first teaching job at East Coulee, a country school a few miles east of Drumheller. He later taught at Wooded Hills School near Big Valley where he met and married Aletha Klaus in 1940. He then purchased the homestead, taught at Kindergarden School and, in 1949, purchased the homestead of Alex Klaus near Big Valley. Aunger School, where he taught for one

year was closed and he was moved to Big Valley School. Bob, Marlene and Allan, his three children, attended Big Valley School. Ado continued to teach until 1964 and then retired to the farm. He passed away in 1990, leaving the homestead to Marlene, who now lives in Toronto. The farm still remains in the family, and Marlene, who married an Estonian, Kalev Kuutan, can claim that her grandchildren are the fifth generation of our family in Canada that can speak Estonian. Bob and Allan both became engineers and are living in Calgary. Bob served as first president of the Alberta Estonian Heritage Society from 2005 - 2007 and Marlene was on the Board of Directors of Estonian House in Toronto from 1999 to 2007.



Ado Tipman feeding geese, 1935

Mary taught school for a number of years in the Botha area until she met Jim Tennant. They were married and moved to Blue River in BC where he worked as a mechanic for the CN railway. She had three sons (all now deceased) and a daughter who lives in BC. Mary passed away in 1980.

Sophie, who taught at Docendo School, met and married Oscar Moro from Eckville in 1937 and moved to Peace River where they also purchased a farm. Later, Oscar set up a machine shop which serviced the farmers and the budding oil industry. They had two daughters, Marilyn who still lives in Peace River and Bonnie who moved to Vancouver Island. Sophie passed away in 1994 and Oscar in 2000.

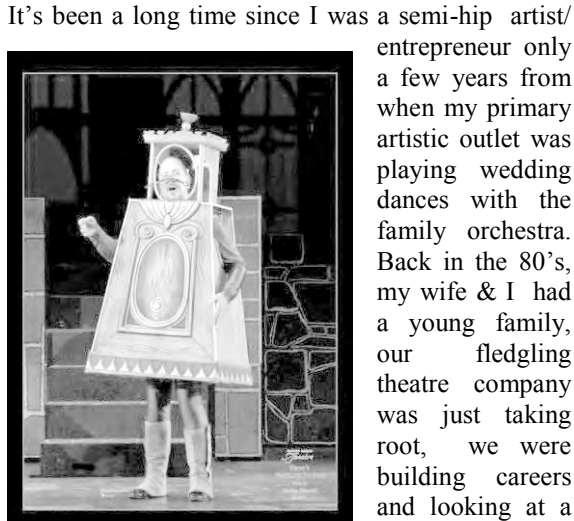
Ferdie worked with Oscar Moro in the machine shop until he retired in the late 70's. He never married and passed away in Nelson, BC in 1989.

Josep Tipman, Magnus' brother, also had a homestead near Linda Hall. Two of his sons, Gustav and Oscar, left to live in Australia but one son, Joe, stayed behind and took over the family homestead and lived there for most of his lifetime. He wrote a series of articles about the pioneer life of the Estonians which was published in the Stettler Independent. His autobiography is also excellent reading.

The band played on...and on

Hal Kerbes, Calgary

"Not so 'Now' Generation"



Hal Kerbes playing Cogsworth in Western Canada Theatre's production of "Beauty & the Beast" in 2007

It's been a long time since I was a semi-hip artist/entrepreneur only a few years from when my primary artistic outlet was playing wedding dances with the family orchestra. Back in the 80's, my wife & I had a young family, our fledgling theatre company was just taking root, we were building careers and looking at a

mortgage that we could not envision ever being paid off.

Auntie Beth talked about "the years just flying by" when I'd graduated from high school. She was right; decades disappeared and in 2010 I'm a middle-aged guy whose smart, lovely elder daughter is a school teacher with two degrees and a funny, industrious husband. My talented, lovely younger daughter is finishing her diploma at Mount Royal University and has one foot out the door headed for Europe. My wife of 28 years and I closed the doors of that "fledgling" theatre company on New Years' Eve, 2008 after 20 years and thousands of productions ... but more on that later.

So: to quote the Sound of Music, let's start at the very beginning.

One hundred years, on a singularly inhospitable January day, Jaan & Annette Kerbes, along with their three small children (and one on the way) stepped off the train in Stettler. The family homesteaded in the Wooded Hills area, thirteen miles northwest of Big Valley, not far from the Red Deer River. By 1922, the family grew to a total of six kids (my dad being the youngest), the "old house" took the place of the "really, *really* old house". The children grew up; my eldest uncle went

to Chicago to be a newspaper pressman & ended up living in Winnipeg. My aunts all logged some time in Calgary working in the professions of the day – hairdresser, seamstress – before two of them returned to the farm. My dad became a rural school teacher who returned to work the farm with my other uncle – who never lived anywhere else until necessitated by ill health in the 1990s.

But with the comings and goings, depression and war, the constant companion to my family was music - oh, how they loved to play instruments and sing and dance. So it was only natural that from the time my Dad was a raw teenager in the 1930s that the family would be making music for the community to dance to. What emerged was the 4K's. "K" for "Kerbes" ... though there was the odd "Klaus" thrown in ... and occasionally a Blair or a Nicklom or a Gabriel – but I digress.

For the next fifty years, the 4K's played for dances – wedding dances, dinner dances, barn dances, sportsman's dances, carnival dances. Throughout Central Alberta, the sweet sound of the saxophones played by Elmer & Albert Kerbes was the soundtrack of many major events.

And then there's my Mom. She came to board at the Kerbes homestead in 1950 as a young relief teacher in a one-room schoolhouse at Wooded Hills. I always suspected one of the things my Dad found most attractive about her was the fact that she played piano, so in 1954 the 4K's acquired a permanent pianist through marriage - and the band played on.

And then in 1957, things changed. I came along, followed by my sister, Annette, in 1960.

We grew up in what was a typically "ethnic" family for the neighbourhood, with the food, the parties & the music. Sometimes my Auntie Beth would quietly sing "Mu Isaama". And at any gathering involving Kerbeses, Hennels, Nickloms, Saars ... and at a certain level of the homemade Saskatoon wine, rum and rye ... there would be a rousing rendition of the "Bear Song". I learned to recognize a few words & phrases of Estonian, mostly choicer phrases used in reference to escaped cattle, but often through the music; sadly, I never mastered the language.



*Cast of the Ice Queen,
written by Hal
Kerbes, pictured at
Stage West for Kids,
Christmas 2001.
Standing, L-R:
Kathryn Kerbes,
Gerald Matthews,
Trevor Rueger, Shari
Wattling, Sarah
Kerbes;
Front L-R: Hannah
Kerbes, Hal Kerbes*

But language was never a barrier when everyone made music. In the late 60s, there was many a party at Mike & Alma Kerbes's house, where the dancing carried on to the wee hours, and I vividly remember the occasion when I was finally taller than Leila (Kerbes) Stanich - who'd always been my favourite dancing partner because she made me feel tall from the time I was about 10.

So music was a big part of our lives from the day we were born. We had our little toy instruments with us as the "4K's of the future" on a float in the 1964 Big Valley Golden Jubilee parade. And by "float" I mean the rock wagon pulled by the old Allys-Chalmers tractor. And by "rock wagon" I mean the splintery, worn cart that the Allys-Chalmers tractor hauled across the field in the spring and into which we'd toss any rock bigger than a walnut that had worked its way up to the surface over the winter. In my world at that time, "rock" had less than nothing to do with Elvis, the Beatles or any other groundbreaking musical influence of the day.

Then we actually learned to play instruments & make music, starting with piano lessons from my mother. You want frustration? ... try teaching piano and music theory to your children. Especially if they might have a little talent and a lot of stubborn.

Then, in the best tradition of "the Music Man", Art Dee swept into the heartland, and in one magical night (in the raw, but finally roofed Big Valley Jubilee hall) the Big Valley Band was born. Our

whole family was swept up in a cause for the next several years: marching in parades around the province, alternately freezing & boiling in the heavy wool uniforms (purchased at a discount from some American high school) blasting out classic Souza tunes to kick off community festivities. At the same time, my sister & I began to work our way into the family business.

No, not farming. Oh, I drove a tractor, picked rocks, raked hay, herded cattle, and remember those days fondly ... but I knew from an early age that my future was not in agriculture. I mean the 4K's.

From the time I was about nine years old, my primary source of income came from playing for wedding dances, dinner dances, barn dances, sportsman's dances, carnival dances. Annette & I also performed everywhere, playing and singing at the community shows, school events and the infamous Christmas concerts at Fritz Hill, Linda Hall, Big Valley School, in talent shows all over central Alberta - we even ended up in the finals of the big Red Deer TV show!

Then came the music festivals. First Drumheller (I came from a pack of 30 equally eager 11 year olds to capture the "Trumpet E" division, and received a \$25 scholarship!) and then the Stettler festival. Then I got disqualified from Drumheller because I twice won a trophy that had been intended to go to a girl. Then the Stettler music festival changed some rules

so there were limits on how many awards anyone could receive.

Did I have endless talent? No. Did I start learning some life lessons? You betcha.

And the band played on and on; the 4K's was well into its second generation of wedding dances. Then in 1971, I entered Wm. E. Hay High school, and things changed again: I discovered drama. Oh, I kept up with music – I was an enthusiastic member of the stage band, concert band, madrigal ensemble, folk mass and concert choirbut in Pat Brayton's drama classes I began to realize that theatre & music couldn't be separated for me.

When it came time to leave the community, I had opportunities to go to U of A to study theatre, to Alberta College of Art + Design to study art, and to U of C to study music. While agriculture was never a real option for me, I didn't come from a tradition of theatre or art, so I opted for music. I received my B. Music from the U of C in 1978; my wife, Kathi, received her degree in Music Education at about the same time.

Kathi & I married in 1982; Sarah was born in 1984. We started Shadow Productions in 1988 with our associate Gail Whiteford. In 1991, our daughter Hannah arrived. I also toured with the a cappella quartet "Guild" for many years, while Kathi taught music and then drama at Chestermere High School. Kathi left teaching and went into theatre full time in the 1990s. From 1988 through 2008, Shadow Productions presented thousands of murder mysteries, family theatre shows, musicals and interactive events.

Which brings us to "more about that later ..." while our company officially closed on New Years' Eve 2008, we still retained the legal entity, and continue to use it to produce entertainment in conjunction with Alberta Prairie Steam Excursions (APSE) out of Stettler.

In 2009, Jaanipäev was held at Linda Hall, and we were asked to present a dinner show for the event. Since it coincided with the first APSE show of the season, I recklessly agreed, thinking "it'll be easy to include something specifically Estonian for Jaanipäev." So I wrote a show that covered the topics of both WWII and Estonian immigrants, and with both of my daughters and our comrades, we presented the show – first in Big Valley then later that evening at Linda Hall.

And of course, knowing that no celebration of Jaanipäev would be appropriate without the Estonian National Anthem or the Bear Song, I had to include them both. The anthem was simple enough. But the Bear Song? Fortunately a happenstance meeting with a colleague – Kathleen Rennie, a Calgary writer – led to her getting her Estonian Dad to send me the lyrics.

On a June evening in 2009, there I was, on the tiny stage at Linda Hall, asking myself "what the hell were you thinking?" I was about to start "the Bear Song," followed closely by the Estonian National Anthem in front of a crowd who actually spoke the language.

Theatre depends on a lot of things – skill, rehearsal, good material, preparation – and magic. And that evening, the magic happened. I started the song and they all joined in! ... chorus of Estonian voices ringing out a folk song that only a few weeks ago had been a dim memory from my childhood. Then, a few moments later, to see them stand, to hear their heartfelt rendition of "Mu Isamaa"? My heart was full, and my life had come full circle.

Postscript: near the end of the term last year, Hannah was at a party with some of her university friends and in the midst of the festivities, she heard something she couldn't quite believe – someone was singing "the Bear Song".

She found a fellow Estonian in the crowd – apparently you still can't separate an Estonian from the music.



Sarah Kerbes and Wyatt Milliard's wedding. July 25, 2010. L-R: Hannah Kerbes, Hal Kerbes, Sarah Milliard, Kathryn Kerbes

(In this picture Wyatt is behind the pillar arguing on the phone with the guy who was supposed to have the wedding cakes set up by now!)

Kerbes Clan Celebrates

About 120 descendants of Mike and Alma Kerbes and other relatives gathered near Rocky Mountain House, Alberta on August 14 and 15, 2010 to commemorate family anniversaries, honors and retirements:

- Leila and Bob Stanich celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary (actual date October 8, 2010).
- Bev Wasylciw turned 65 on September 3, 2010 and marked the occasion with family at White Sands.
- Deane Kerbes celebrated his 80th birthday on October 23 with family and friends in Stettler.
- June and Bob Ekelund celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary (actual date August 18, 2010); June and Bob Ekelund recently retired after 43 years of foster parenting. They raised a large family of eight children of their own. The couple was honored recently by the Central Alberta Child and Family Services. June and Bob have had 477 children in their home during the past 43 years! They claim the trick to raising children depends on providing the three “s’s”: “Security, Self-reliance and Self-esteem.” June’s sister Leila, Bob Stanich and June’s brother, and Deane and Irene Kerbes also attended the celebrations.
- Donna and Eldon Kerbes were honored as Citizens of the Year and received Honorary Parade Marshall Awards of the Town of Peachland in B.C. According to Peachland Mayor Keith Fielding, “both of them have been deeply involved in the community since moving here, and they are very deserving of the Award;” Eldon, retired since 2002 has held the position of president of the Peachland Lions Club. Donna is involved with the Kelowna General Hospital Foundation and the Peachlands Arts Troupe.
- Twenty Kerbes family members, many of whom are members of AEHS, attended Jaanipäev 2009 at Linda Hall.
- Mable Schultz, Edna Leffler and Sid Leffler, descendants of Nick and Lizzie (Kerbes) Laas who homesteaded in Chester, Montana, attended Estonian functions at Linda Hall in 1999 and 2009. These descendants of Nick and Lizzie have expressed interest in AEHS and its heritage projects.
- Members of the Kerbes clan are keenly interested in their Estonian roots and cultural traditions. Family members have visited the land of their ancestors to meet relatives and to toast their heritage.



Members of Kerbes clan: Clockwise from bottom left: standing L to R: Charlie and Walt Laas, Billie Hamel, Gus Laas, front: Mable Schultz, Nick and Lizzie Laas, Edna Leffler; middle left photo, standing L to R: June Ekelund, Marg Pelto, Bev Wasylciw, Donna Summerfeld, Leila Stanich, front: Ken, Eldon and Deane Kerbes, 2010 seniors; top left photo: June and Bob Ekelund with book of foster children's names; top right photo: Bob and June Ekelund (56th anniversary), Leila and Bob Stanich (50th anniversary), 2010; middle right: Eldon and Donna Kerbes, Peachland, BC. Citizen of the Year & Honorary Parade Marshall; bottom right photo: Nick and Lizzie (Kerbes) Laas, Havre Montana, February 24, 1916.

Võro in Vogue

Kara Brown, University of South Carolina



*Kara Brown wearing
her favourite
Estonian hat*

When I visited the Kreutzwald School in Võru, Estonia in 1999, the teacher introduced me to twenty of her fourth grade students, "Today we have a visitor with us who has come all the way from the United States, from the state of Indiana so that she can learn the

Võro language. Now class, can you imagine how lucky you are that you don't have to

travel so far to learn

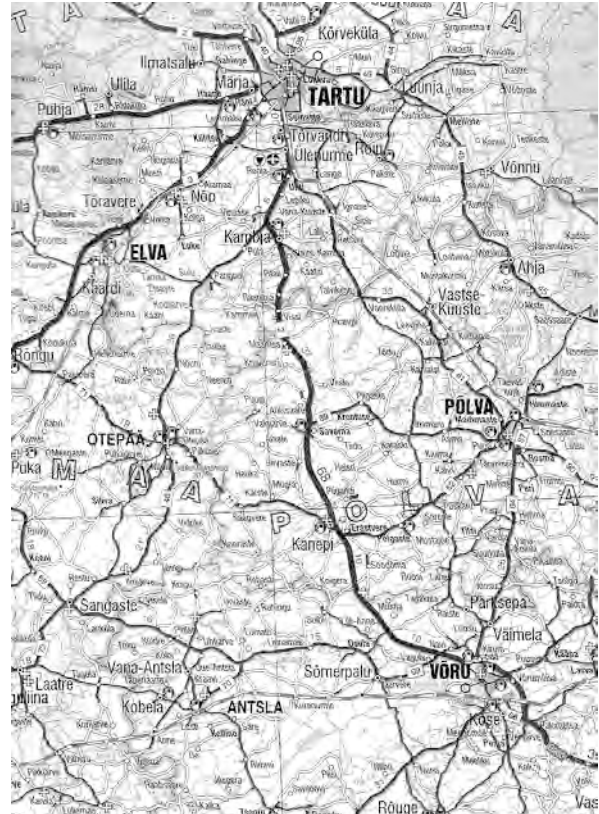
our beautiful language and how important it is that people are coming from all over the world to learn our language?"

With this introduction, I was thrust into the promotion and revival of the Võro language (voro kiil), a movement unfolding throughout southern Estonia. The revival includes teachers, politicians, poets, geographers and administrators, who are attempting to increase the use of the Võro language, which is currently spoken to some degree by approximately 35,000-50,000 people in southern Estonia and beyond. The majority of fluent Võro speakers are elderly Estonians who continue to live in the rural parts of southern Estonia. The Estonians leading the Võro-language revival are all fluent speakers as well, but most are young and live in the countryside of Võru County.

For almost twenty years, a grassroots effort has sought to revive Võro and reverse the twentieth-century shift away from speaking the language. The decline was a result, in part, from the ban on the instruction and speaking of Võro in schools during the Soviet period and from an earlier push to speak only Estonian in schools during the interwar period. As a result of these efforts to discourage the use of written and spoken Võro, some in the region consider it to be a language that should be spoken in more informal settings, with friends and family, and not used in the formal, professional spheres of work, school and government. Others have responded to the linguistic decline with clear goals to aid in Võro revival: the creation of an orthography, the publication of textbooks and literature, the organization of language classes in schools, the training of language teachers, the expansion of Võro-language usage in local media, and the

collection of historical place names in Võru County.

Estonians are struggling to fight this regional-language decline for several reasons. For some, losing the language, means losing family connections, especially since Võro is often the language spoken at home between grandparents and grandchildren. Others are driven to maintain the language out of concern that a way of life and a way of seeing the world will be lost if Võro dies.



*Area map of Võru County in southeastern Estonia
(Eesti, EO Map, 2007)*

As a result of revitalization efforts and the shifting ideas about the role of regional languages in Estonia, the oral and material use of Võro has dramatically increased since independence. The summer of 2008 marked several significant milestones for the Võro regional-language community in southeastern Estonia. Language activists, county governments and local musicians organized the country's first ever regional-language song festival, *Uma Pido* (Our Party), which celebrated its second gathering during the summer of 2010. In a country proud of their over one century-old tradition of song festivals, to have two and a half thousand singers gathered in southeastern Estonia to participate in regional-language singing and celebration took an old tradition in new directions. Weeks later at a

celebratory, public event, the President of Estonia helped to unveil a Võro-language official road sign – the first along the country’s major North-South highway. The summer concluded with the twentieth meeting of *Kaika Suve Ulikool* (Kaika Summer University), the annual three-day summer university where adults and children alike come together to learn in the language and about local places and regional culture.

In the ten years I have conducted research in the region (1999-2009), there has also been a noticeable spike in commercial and governmental use of Võro in signs. Although standard Estonian continues to dominate southeastern Estonia, the regional language is increasingly used in virtual and physical space. For example, the webpage of Võro County government (www.werro.ee) uses the regional language in its motto “Our land, our language” (“Uma maa, uma kiil”) and provides quasi-translations of the Estonian-language main menu options. While the content of the county webpages remains exclusively in Estonian, the language functions to mark the County’s distinctive linguistic difference. In the bus stations and in the cities and towns of the region, stickers declaring “You can use the Võro language here” (*Tan vôi pruuki Võro kilt*) are stuck on storefronts and doors. In the Võro Cultural Center building, signs in the regional language hang identifying the main rooms and performance spaces. Along the county roads, official signs mark the cultural border of Historic Võrumaa. The streets of Võro city center are dotted with storefronts, including a second-hand store and a liquor shop, that use Võro in some capacity. And, finally, commercial enterprises use the regional language to promote their bread, dairy products and meat on advertisements and product wrappings.

The Võro Institute has made considerable progress since its’ founding in 1995 to spearhead the language revival. Currently, more than half the schools in the region offer elective Võro-language and culture classes, maps have been printed with Võro place names, and dozens of books and tapes have been published in the language. The regional-language renaissance extends to the higher-education level as well with Tartu University offering courses about the Võro language, regional folklore and history.

One of the greatest challenges in the educational sphere is to maintain and expand the breadth of regional-language instruction in general public schools. In most southern Estonian schools, the popularity of English and computer classes helps to



Bakery sign in Võro language

undermine the development of and enrollment in Võro-language classes. Language-teacher retirement and incremental recruitment further complicates planning.

Despite these challenges, or perhaps because of them, recent initiatives have targeted the regional-language education of the youngest Estonians – the pre-schoolers. A handful of local public kindergartens in southeastern Estonia have begun to incorporate Võro regularly through the use of naptime lullabies, group singing and basic language instruction. One kindergarten also posted poetry in the Võro language on homemade posters and Estonian texts in the kindergarten hallway to promote language prestige. The wall hangings, decorated with small cornflowers, the national flower of Estonia, and a woven folk belt from the region, declared both symbolically and literally the kindergarten’s parallel

allegiance to the local community and the Estonian nation.

Outside the public sphere, a pilot Võro “language nest” opened in the 2009 for one day a week also to serve the youngest members of the community. The language nest, a result of NGO and public institute cooperation, promotes a one-language immersion approach to instruction through the exclusive use of Võro with a small group of children. This entree into early-childhood education strives to sustain Võro by passing the language along to the next generation of Estonians and by preserving it well into the twenty-first century.

(Kara D. Brown is an Assistant Professor of Educational Studies at University of South Carolina, [brownk25\(at\)mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:brownk25(at)mailbox.sc.edu))



Võro County Poster with logo “Our land, our language”

Anu Tali's Return Engagement With the ESO

Jan Urke, Principal Bass, ESO

It was certainly a pleasure to have Anu Tali back for a return engagement with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra (ESO) on October 15 and 16, 2010. In the meantime we had also had the pleasure of a pair of concerts conducted by veteran Estonian conductor Eri Klas. It seemed appropriate to include music by an Estonian composer for Anu's return engagement.



Left to right: Anu Tali, Lucas Waldin and Sophie Kienlen

The first half of the concert for Anu's return concert opened with the Beatrice and Benedict overture by Hector Berlioz, followed by the Piano Concerto #1 by Frederic Chopin. This first half of the concert could have been followed by any number of war-horses of the symphonic repertoire. We were, however, blessed with the Canadian premiere of Arvo Pärt's Symphony #4, the "Los Angeles".

The work was commissioned and premiered by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and Esa-Pekka Salonen at Disney Hall, LA; 10 January 2009, dedicated to Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the former oil magnate controversially imprisoned in Russia. Symphony #4 has already had about 40 performances around the world, which includes five or six performances of a European tour by the Nordic Symphony Orchestra. This orchestra, co-founded by Anu Tali and her identical twin sister Kadri, included Vienna in their European tour.

Anu has worked closely with Arvo Pärt for her performances of his Symphony #4, staying in touch with him prior to each performance, the ESO performances not withstanding. Her collaboration with Pärt and her experience of previous performances of the piece were a valuable asset for rehearsing it for the performance in Edmonton.

Pärt's first three symphonies were scored for full orchestra. The fourth symphony, written after a 39-year hiatus from the previous symphonies, is scored only for strings, harp and percussion, Pärt's favorite orchestration for his *Tintinnabuli* (ringing of bells), composition technique. To quote Pärt, "*Tintinnabuli* is the mathematically exact connection from one line to another.....*tintinnabuli* is the rule where the melody and the accompaniment [accompanying voice]...is one. One plus one, it is one - it is not two. This is the secret of this technique".

The performances of Pärt's Symphony #4 in Edmonton was a success, the result of a dedicated collaboration between Anu and the players. Although there is a feeling of simplicity and freedom to the piece, a lot of hard work was needed to allow it to be so.

Symphony #4 with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Esa-Pekka Salonen is now available from ECM records New Series 2160.



Anu Tali and friends at a post-concert social hosted by Lucas Waldin. Left to right: Jan Urke, Anu Tali, Külliva Kangur, Dave Kiil

Estonia at EXPO 2010 in Shanghai, China

Kristine Zielinski, Edmonton



Kristine Zielinski with tour guide Sandra Veisson at the Estonian pavilion

In planning a holiday to China this year, I never expected to be speaking Estonian during my visit to Shanghai. This opportunity presented itself when we decided to attend the 2010 World's Fair. This World's Fair was the largest in history with every country participating. And it is the first Expo to focus on the issue of the city with the theme of "Better City, Better Life".

Participants from all over the world staged exhibitions, events and forums to discuss the development of the city, to offer visions for the future and to promote understanding, communication and cooperation between nations and cultures. There were three core components – theme pavilions, country pavilions and corporate pavilions. It was the most amazing event showing great creativity and variety in the styles, finishes and presentations of the various pavilions. More information on the pavilions and the exposition can be obtained at <http://en.expo2010.cn>.

The Estonian pavilion was very eye catching with its colourful exterior constructed of a durable striped fabric in traditional Estonian costume colours. The general elements of the exhibition area were large, colourful and interesting Piggy Banks which stood for positive urban subjects, like Fresh Air, Green Parks, and Mobile Parking. It expressed a unique concept where the visitor had the opportunity to

express their voice on urbanization and propose suggestions for the various problems facing World Cities. In addition, visitors could send messages to their home city managers expressing their ideas.

I was able to meet with the Estonian representative at the pavilion who was happy to meet someone who could speak Estonian. In addition to explaining about the pavilion, she provided me with information, pamphlets and brochures on Estonia



Piggy Banks representing positive urban subjects like Green Parks

along with a luminous Piggy key chain, (a useful souvenir), which most Estonians own since the streets of Estonia are dark.

In addition, she asked if I would be attending Tallinn in 2011 as it has been selected to be the „European Capital of Culture.“ It is a year long celebration, drawing international attention and it will be one of the biggest cultural events in the history of Estonia. There are many events throughout the year in Tallinn most of which will be close to the sea as there is a desire to re-develop the seaside part of the city. At the Urban Installation Festival, different architectural installations which form a network will allow people to see the city in a different way.

Nargen Festival, founded by Tõnu Kaljuste, will take place on the nearly deserted Naissaar Island just off the coast of Tallinn. It will feature music from around the world in a most exotic setting, the Omari Barn. This unique venue was built thanks to the efforts of Kaljuste and provides a stark setting for classical contemporary music. A documentary film about Tõnu Kaljuste's adventure of building Omari Barn is entitled "Vastutuulesaal." (Headwind Hall).

If you are planning a trip to Estonia in 2011, I suggest you check out this cultural event. For more information, please go to www.savecity.org and www.nargenfestival.ee



2011 West Coast Estonian Days

August 3-7, 2011, Portland, Oregon

WWW.LEP2011.COM

The Portland LEP 2011 festival organizing committee has been working diligently to create a profound and memorable festival, which we hope will take this 56 year old tradition into the hearts of the new generation of Estonian-Americans. We have many new events planned to spark the interests of our youth all the way to our elderly. We hope to rekindle Estonian passion in our West Coast communities, and also with the many Friends of Estonians among us!

LODGING

LEP 2011's home base will be the **Doubletree Hotel** in central Portland. We have arranged special convention pricing. Relax in one of the hotel's 476 beautifully appointed guest rooms and suites featuring large work desks, high-speed internet access, two phones, in-room coffee/tea, hair dryers, on-demand movies, and incredible views of either the city skyline or the Cascade Mountain range. The hotel also provides ATM, baggage storage, elevators, gift shop, laundry/valet service, lounge, luggage hold, news stand, room service, safety deposit boxes, fitness room, pool, and rowing machines.

The DoubleTree Hotel (1-800-996-0510) is now accepting hotel room reservations for participants of the West Coast Estonian Festival. Reduced room rates are available in accordance to the hotel's agreement with the Estonian League of the West Coast. During your reservation request, please indicate that a) your reservation is for the DoubleTree Hotel at Lloyd Center in Portland, Oregon, and b) your reservation is part of the Estonian League group rate. Room rates are \$104 to \$119/night plus 12.5% tax.

INVITATION TO PERFORMERS

The LEP 2011 organizing committee invites folkdancers, singers, musicians, and other performing groups to participate in cultural performances during the festival. Performance opportunities are available at numerous venues, including Rahvapidu, Laulupidu, and Tantsupidu. If you do not currently participate in a folkdance troupe or choir, you can still perform at LEP 2011!

Folkdancers and musicians, please contact liinateose@LEP2011.com.

Choral groups, please contact katitamm@LEP2011.com.

INVITATION TO CLERGY

We invite all members of the clergy to participate in this celebration. LEP 2011 provides many opportunities for spiritual fellowship. These include an ecumenical outdoor worship service, prayer services, and several discussion groups.

Members of the clergy, please contact kallemerilo@LEP2011.com

PERFORMERS FROM ESTONIA

The folk band **Kihnu Poisid** was established in 1996 in Kihnu, a small island southwest of the mainland. The music group's main focus is to restore old Kihnu sailor songs and bring these to their audience. "... the songs of the sea, the sailors and our brides who were left behind at the shore are particularly close to our hearts." In the past 15 years they have performed at all major Estonian folk festivals and have released two CDs, which tell stories about the adventures of Kihnu sailors.

Pärnu folk dance ensemble **Kajakas** was founded in 1951 and its current director is Rita Mändla. The ensemble is composed of six dance groups with dancers aged 12 through 58. Of these six troupes, the advanced youth folk dance troupe will be coming to Portland. Kajakas has performed in Europe, in Africa and also in America. The dance group performs traditional Estonian folk dances, as well as theatrical and choreographed dance performances.

LEP 2011 PROGRAM OF EVENTS

LEP 2011 begins Wednesday evening with a gala **Opening Ceremony** with a regal procession of LEP emblem banners from 1953 to date. The ceremony will feature an orchestral and mass choral performance composed by the Estonian composer, Cyrillus Kreek, and directed by our own Lonnie Cline.

The next day, we travel by buses to Alderbrook Park to celebrate **Rahvapidu** within the old-growth forest of the Cascade Mountain range. Many fun-filled activities for children and content-rich programs for adults will keep everyone entertained.

On Friday, we prepare for the evening's performance of "**Hõissa, Tuljak!**", the

laulupidu and tantsupidu musical interpretation of Tuljak.

Saturday starts with an outdoor **ecumenical worship service** at The Grotto, a beautiful natural sanctuary within a rock cliff. We then continue to the DoubleTree Hotel for numerous performances and workshops, ending with the traditional **LEP Ball**.

On Sunday morning, LEP 2011 culminates with an inspiring **Closing Ceremony**, which reflects on the current festival and festivals of years past.

Throughout the course of our festival, the **Kuld Lõvi** hall is available for us as a festival "Living Room". This hall will be filled with ongoing performances, forums, and workshops to enhance your festival experience! You will enjoy this facility as a wonderful place to meet your friends throughout the day and evening.

The organizers of LEP 2011 seek to present a culturally rich and multi-faceted festival celebrating our heritage in both the Estonian and English languages.

TICKETS

Event tickets will become available as the program schedule becomes finalized.

WWW.LEP2011.COM

Visit the website for the West Coast Estonian Festival 2011 to get the latest updates about events and performers! Join Facebook and share your ideas and suggestions to help create a wonderful Estonian cultural experience!

*For further information, please contact
kallemerilo@ LEP2011.com*

Adriana Davies Honored with Order of Canada



Adriana Davies was invested into the Order of Canada by Governor General David Johnston in a ceremony at Rideau Hall, Ottawa on November 17, 2010. She was lauded for her efforts in championing and preserving Alberta's heritage.

Her citation reads: "For decades, Adriana Davies has championed Alberta's heritage. As executive director of the Alberta's Museums Association, she was instrumental in developing a framework, now modelled nationally, that enables museums to measure performance, plan for the future and strive for excellence. Through her contributions to the Alberta Online Encyclopedia, the Virtual Museum of Canada and the Canadian Culture Online Program, she has helped to make our nation's historical, natural, cultural and scientific heritage more accessible to the general public. As a volunteer, she continues to support cultural and heritage organizations provincially and nationally."

Adriana Davies was Director of Heritage Community Foundation which designed and developed Alberta's Estonian Heritage website in 2009. Her leadership contributed importantly to the documentation of Alberta's Estonian community

AEHS congratulates Adriana on the well -deserved honor!

Xenophobe's® guide to the Estonians



Xenophobe's® guide to the Estonians is side-splitting, each page a gaggle of giggles that often sent me into bouts of convulsive laughter. Not only is it irreverently funny, it is educational and extremely well written. The guide is authored by Hilary Bird, Ulvi Mustmaa and Lembit Opik offering the perspective of an immigrant, a native and an Estonian born abroad.

It is the manual to hand out to anyone who doesn't quite get us. It explains our frosty exteriors, why we split napkins in half, and don't indulge in praise and compliments. We've been outed ... and its been done in such a way that we can't get mad for laughing. This is the book that will untangle who we are and why we are the way we are, it will explain much to our children and grandchildren. And did I say it's very funny? One copy is not enough, it's as simple as that.... and let's note Christmas is around the corner!

Xenophobe's® guide to the Estonians is available in Canada for \$8.95 plus shipping through Amazon.ca. The international standard book number for an English copy is ISBN: 978-1-1906042-30-1 and may be ordered through your local book store.

Not only is Xenophobe's® Guide reasonably priced, it's wonderfully brilliant, a fast read with a romp of belly laughs. Trust me you'll want 2 or 3 copies for give-aways.

Editors note: Excerpts from article by Eva Vabasalu in Eesti Elu, Nr. 46, November 19, 2010

Yippee, we're famous!

'The Economist' blog
Nov. 27, 2010 by E.L

ESTONIAN PR is legendary. But sometimes good news (ie, news about Estonia) comes purely fortuitously. One such instance is the Thanksgiving edition of the New Yorker, which has an amusing cover (follow the link for a better-quality version of the image). Along with other dysfunctional bits of the modern American family (I particularly liked "Tommy's foul-mouthed classmate" and the "psycho divorcee from next-door", and the duplicate "golf-bore uncles"), to create the sizzling mix of unhappiness, oddness, and clashing expectations which is so quintessential of these artificial social events, the cover artist has added the vital character of a **"monosyllabic Estonian exchange student"**. What could better display Estonia's arrival in the world of sophisticated New York society? A happy Thanksgiving weekend to all our readers, and remember that the best cranberries come from... Estonia.



Corrections

Please note the following corrections in AjaKaja Summer 2010:

- Nicklom family: Dianne Nicklom was born in 1954 (not 1945); Gustav Nicklom (not August) conducted christenings and funerals within the Stettler Estonian community.
- Lustwerk family: Evelyn born in 1932, Ralph born in 1935, Loretta born in 1937

Estonians keep their musical tradition alive

With a long history of song festivals, Estonia is a country where singing has served the purpose of both entertainment and political protest. Today's young Estonians are keeping up this tradition.

The small Baltic country of Estonia has hundreds of choirs, which meet at schools, churches and even factories. Many towns hold regular music festivals of their own, but the vocal climax for the country is the Estonian Song Festival, which has taken place every five years. First held in 1869, the event continued throughout Estonia's tumultuous history and now attracts tens of thousands of participants.



Singing is an important art form for Estonians

Music as a political tool

At 34, accomplished singer Tomi Rahula is too young to remember the worst of the Soviet rule over Estonia, which lasted from 1944 to 1991, but he clearly recalls occasions when Estonians used song to defy the Soviet censors.

“There were songs that we were supposed to sing about Lenin and Stalin, but when that singing ended people didn’t go away - they started to sing songs that they weren’t allowed to sing,” said Rahula. (The authorities) couldn’t do anything because there were like 80,000 people.”

With its strong economy and highly educated workforce, Estonia has become the envy of many former Soviet republics since its independence. Even in the two decades since the fall of the Soviet Union, singing has not lost its significance in the republic.

Across the spectrum

Rahula is the concertmaster and conductor of the Tallinn Boys Choir, which was founded by his mother Lydia Rahula, in 1988. The two of them work well together, in spite of – or perhaps because of - the family connection.

“We feel the music very well (together),” said Lydia Rahula. “We can look at each other and know. It works - we have the same understanding, the same heart, although we have two heads.” The choir, made up of men and boys aged six to 36, rehearses several times a week and performs more than 30 concerts per year. Everything from Ave Maria to African spirituals is included in the repertoire.

As a child, Tomi Rahula was a choir boy, but also a composer. In 1988, he penned the tune Estonia took to Eurovision Song Contest, “The children of the Sea.” These days, he juggles his choir duties with his other role as keyboardist in the successful rock band The Sun.

“I perform in churches and in clubs and I see very intelligent people and very drunk people,” said Rahula, laughing. By living out his music career on both ends of the spectrum, he says he never gets bored.

Enduring passion

While his style of music might change from day to day, fame has not changed him much, according to his friend and fellow choir member Ants Aguraiuja. “We were at the same school and he was one or two years younger,” said Aguraiuja.

“We’ve been singing with him for almost 30 years. He’s the same.”

At 36, Aguraiuja is the veteran of the Tallinn Boys Choir. He was scouted by Lydia Rahula at the tender age of six, and has followed her ever since. “It has been a pleasure to sing and music gives my soul something that I need,” said Aguraiuja.

If the rest of Estonia shares his sentiment, there is sure to be plenty of singing involved in next year's celebration of the country's 20th anniversary of independence.

Author: Karen percy, Tallinn (ew)
Editor: Kate Brown
Reproduced from DW-World DE



When the weather is good, music is taken outside

Queen Elizabeth II Decorates Estonian Ballet Dancers

15 June, 2010 (BNS) -

Queen Elizabeth II on Saturday awarded the CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) to former dancers of the English National Ballet Age Oks and Toomas Edur from Estonia on her official

birthday. Oks and Edur received the decoration for the development of cultural relations between Great Britain and Estonia and for furthering the art of dance. The British Embassy informed Oks (Oaks) and Edur were dancers of the English National



Ballet since 1990 until their return to Estonia last summer. The embassy said that during nine years, Oks and Edur performed ballet at the highest level in the English National Ballet. The British Embassy expressed the hope that

cultural relations between Estonia and Great Britain would continue developing now that Oks and Edur were working as artistic directors of the Estonian National Ballet.

Itching for Estonia!

Only on Saaremaa

Life in the world's only post-communist Nordic country



Pictured is a Saaremaa hot tub (kümbustünn). Website address on the side of the hot tub: www.urrus.ee; also <http://saaremaasaunad.ee/>



Hot tubs such as the one pictured are popular throughout Estonia; many use the word Saaremaa in their advertising, ostensibly because Finnish tourists are enthralled by the Island. The hot tubs became particularly popular during World Cup cross-country ski races at Otepää in 2009.

There is a special aura on the Island that we cannot describe... Maybe it is because of junipers standing on the edge of the forest, maybe it is the stony beach that creates this atmosphere or maybe it is the unspoiled forest that creates this aura. Visitors will be fascinated by houses with thatched roofs, stone fences and windmills... and strong, home-brewed beer!

Saaremaa's soil is ungrateful, and harvests tend to be poor.

Suur Tõll and his wife Piret (pictured) are the mythical heroes of Saaremaa

Consequently, the Islander's sense of humor easily outweighs their crops. It is said that, in their hearts, Islanders are principled, survivalists, and self-reliant last action heroes.

ALBERTA ESTONIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP, NOV 2010

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Kerbes ~ Richard - Saskatoon, SK
Kiil ~ Dave & Betty Ann - Edmonton, AB
Kiil ~ Glenn & Ingrid, Ranek, Kalev - Edmonton, AB
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Kingsep ~ Bob & Annette - Redwood Mdws, AB
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Magi ~ Enzo & Maimu - Calgary, AB
Matiisen ~ Arne & Carolyn, Janet, Melanie Dewar - Calgary, AB
McClung ~ Eda - Edmonton, AB
McElroy ~ Elve & Wilfred - Camrose, AB
Mottus ~ Arnold & Vera, Cathy - Red Deer, AB
Mottus ~ Brian - Whitehorse, Yukon
Munz ~ Lillian - Calgary, AB
Munz Gue ~ Martha - Medicine Hat, AB
Myhre ~ Mae - Port Alberni, BC
Nicklom ~ Otto & Gladys - Stettler, AB
Pääsuke ~ Elizabeth - Edmonton, AB
Pääsuke ~ Mark - Vancouver, BC
Pääsuke ~ Rein & Janice - Calgary, AB
Pääsuke ~ Toomas - Canmore, AB
Pallo ~ Jack Henry - Red Deer, AB
Pastewka ~ Astrid - Calgary, AB
Pastewka ~ Peter & Tina - Calgary, AB
Peet ~ Ethel - Edmonton, AB
Pelto ~ John & Margaret, Christine - Sherwood Park, AB
Pihooja ~ Ralph Pihooja & Nella Collins, Liz Tardie - Edmonton, AB
Pilt ~ Shirley - Edmonton, AB
Põhjakas ~ Kaljo & Lilian - Lethbridge, AB
Posti ~ Allan & Maria, Ryan - Eckville, AB
Robertson ~ David & Christine, Brendan, Karl, Travis - Leduc, AB
Ruus ~ Ivar & Lea - Calgary, AB
Saar ~ Lembit & Iris - Calgary, AB
Saar ~ Rein & Patricia - Calgary, AB
Sandre ~ Ülo - Calgary, AB
Sastok ~ Laine - Edmonton, AB
Schuler ~ Kelly, Cameron, Carole Grant - Calgary, AB
Shongrunden ~ Astrid - Penticton, BC
Simm ~ Nurmi - Edmonton, AB
Sparrow ~ Lori, Lexi, Evan, Reed - Eckville, AB
Tiislar ~ Enn & Pärja - Canmore, AB
Tikka ~ Olev - Calgary, AB
Tipman ~ Bob & Kathy, Liisa, James - Calgary, AB
Ustina ~ Astrid, Holly Idenouye, Brooklyn Idenouye - Edmonton, AB
Ustina ~ Judy K - Edmonton, AB
Virak ~ Viktor - Toronto, ON
Visser ~ Mari & Igor, Constantine - Cochrane, AB
Wartnow ~ Floyd C - Delta, BC
Watson ~ Maret - Spruce Grove, AB
Weiler ~ Roland - Dundas, ON
Zach ~ Inge - Calgary, AB
Zielinski ~ Michel & Kristine, Jeffery - Spruce Grove, AB
Zoumer ~ Anne - Calgary, AB



Kaunist jõuluaega!
Head uut aastat!
Merry Christmas!
Happy New Year!