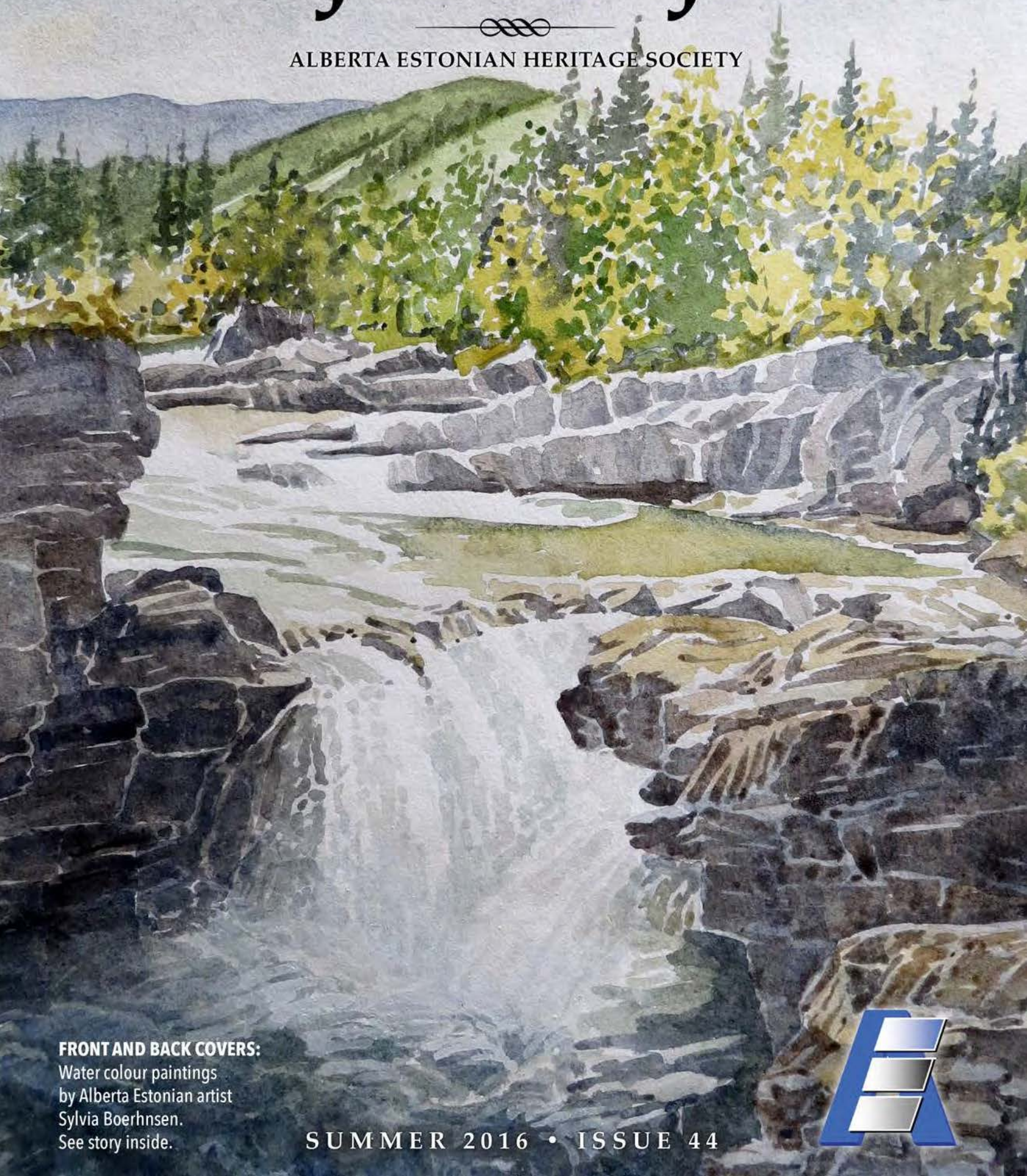


AJAKAJA



ALBERTA ESTONIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY



FRONT AND BACK COVERS:

Water colour paintings
by Alberta Estonian artist
Sylvia Boerhnsen.
See story inside.

SUMMER 2016 • ISSUE 44



Alberta Estonian Heritage Society 2016

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.

BOARD

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| President | Kelly Schuler |
| Vice-President | Helgi Leesment |
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| Director | Bob Tipman |
| Past President | Ave Peetri |

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

AEHS Membership Application

Membership applications can be completed on www.aehs.ca website under Menu Option: **Membership**.

Membership queries and written applications can be submitted to Membership Director Lorne Hennel:

e-mail: hennell@telus.net

Regular mail: Lorne Hennel

48 Thornlee Cres. N.W.,
Calgary, AB., T2K 2W3.

AjaKaja

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

Copies of AjaKaja can be ordered from emcclung@shaw.ca. Non-members may purchase this special issue of AjaKaja for \$10.00 (in Canada, includes postage) by contacting Eda McClung.

Please submit articles, photographs and heritage-related items to Eda McClung at emcclung@shaw.ca or Dave Kiil at adkiil@shaw.ca

Cover Design: Front and back covers: watercolors courtesy of Sylvia Boerhnsen. Story on page 24 of AjaKaja. Cover design by Janet Matiisen, a freelance graphic designer with KJM Marketing. She is a proud Estonian-Canadian with deep roots in both countries.



AjaKaja

Alberta Estonian
Heritage Society

Summer 2016
Issue Number 44

From the Editors

With the second half of the year still ahead, 2016 is shaping up as a year of new initiatives and accomplishments for our Society.

At the recent AGM in Red Deer, AEHS elected a new president, Kelly Schuler, of Calgary. She succeeds Ave Peetri who has provided exceptional leadership for the past three years but is now moving to Oman. We wish her and Kevin all the best in their new adventure.

The demographic of Alberta's Estonian community continues to change. Interests of multi-generational descendants of pioneers and post-WWII immigrants continue to evolve, and our Society is working to keep apace. Kelly Schuler, a fifth generation descendant of Barons area pioneers, looks forward to exploring ways to foster growth and connectivity amongst the many generations of Alberta Estonians.

Work is well underway to update the AEHS website. The public will be able to access previous Heritage Project materials, read about upcoming events, see links to other relevant sites, including access to Facebook, read back issues of AjaKaja (2005-2014) and renew their membership online. A 'members only' section will contain our membership list as well as recent issues of AjaKaja. The updated website will ensure that our Society is available to the broadest possible audience.

We are elated over the number, range and quality of articles sent to AjaKaja. These include a comprehensive Hennel family tree and history, showing the hundreds of connections which have made their mark in the Stettler area. Each photo alone could tell a story. This issue also describes a local Estonian painter who is recognized globally for her watercolours and whose art forms the cover for this issue. There are stories by family members of their resourceful and accomplished ancestors, all attesting to an interest in roots and heritage. In the article by the young woman from Estonia, here on a study visit, she notes our "determination to keep our Estonianess alive".

The upcoming Summer Social 2016 at Linda Hall is a province wide gathering to enjoy and celebrate our Estonian heritage. Attendees can visit a pioneer Estonian log house at the Stettler Country Museum, and tour the Estonian Pioneer Cemetery and 1906 Chapel. A demonstration of the updated AEHS website will introduce our members to its many applications and global reach.

We gratefully acknowledge recent financial support from the Estonian Government (National Archive) and the Estonian Foundation of Canada in Toronto. These grants have enabled us to complete several heritage initiatives in the past and will support future website development, publication of AjaKaja and social initiatives for our membership.

Heartfelt thanks to our contributors whose exceptional stories made it a pleasure to compile this AjaKaja. Please keep up your fine work! We wish our readers a 'happy Jaanipäev' and an enjoyable summer

Eda McClung and Dave Kiil

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ESTONIAN FOUNDATION OF CANADA
EESTI SIHTKAPITAL KANADAS

**We thank the Estonian
Foundation of Canada for
their ongoing support of
AEHS Heritage Projects.**

AEHS President's Message

Ave Peetri, Calgary, Alberta

Tere, my dear fellow Alberta Estonians!

I am very glad to let you know that we have gone ahead and started work on updating our website. It hasn't gone public yet, as I am write this article, but we will send out a newsletter when it has. We are updating not only the design and technology behind it but also going through the articles and information to make sure they are still relevant. We are excited to get it out as soon as possible as it will make using our website easier for those posting the information and for you, readers, finding it. We will continue with the Facebook page as well since some of you are finding the content there interesting and informative.

I also invite everyone to attend the Summer Social on August 20th and celebrate together our Heritage and 25 years of Estonia becoming independent again.

Unfortunately this will be the last time I am writing this column, as those of you who attended the AGM on May 28th already know – I have resigned as the President of AEHS. I have loved being involved in the Society and meeting a lot of you. It truly has been a wonderful time for me and I have enjoyed learning about the Estonian heritage in Alberta and getting to know the people here. So, it's not you, it's me! I am stepping down because my husband Kevin and I are moving to Oman in the Middle East. Kevin got a good job offer and even though we were not planning to leave Alberta, we decided to take the opportunity, given the current economic situation here. I will be able to continue with my coaching practice – virtually with my clients in Alberta and find some connections in Asia and the Middle East.

Just a few words about Oman. It is a peaceful, non-radical Muslim country. Women work and drive cars



and do not cover their faces. (I get asked about that all the time). There is a strong connection with Great Britain so almost everyone speaks English. The weather is very hot in the summer – most locals find a way to take a holiday and go somewhere cooler. Whereas winters are lovely in the twenties and dry. Oman has both the mountains and the sea. You are welcome to visit us, I'll be happy to show you around. I have already connected with a few Estonians there and am looking forward to finding out how to get engaged with the community. As supposedly Earnest Hemingway has said: there are Estonians in every port of the world.

I am very happy to announce that the new President of the AEHS is

5th generation Estonian Kelly Schuler. Kelly and I met the first year I came to live in Alberta and have been keeping in touch ever since. She has helped us with different projects and is familiar with many members and the workings of the Society. I am hoping that her becoming formally involved, will attract more Alberta Estonians to engage with AEHS.

I would like to thank every Board member for being the absolutely wonderful people that you are and so passionately standing for preserving and keeping alive the Heritage of Alberta Estonians. I am very grateful for all the support I have received from you over the years and everything that I have learned from you. The Estonian Heritage in Alberta is very unique and thanks to your efforts, it is now also known in many countries of the world.

I am hoping that many of you will keep in touch. My email will still be the same: ave.peatr@gmail.com.

Farewell,

Ave

Kelly Schuler elected President of AEHS

Helgi Leesment, Calgary, Alberta

The Alberta Estonian Heritage Society (AEHS) held its annual general meeting at the Kerry Wood Nature Centre in Red Deer on Saturday May 28, 2016 with Ave Peetri presiding. It was preceded by a board meeting earlier same day.

With the past year's meeting minutes, audited financial report and budget approved, those present listened intently to the president's report covering the past year's AEHS and related events. It began with mention of the highly successful Consular Ball, hosted by Honorary Consul for Estonia, Christine Robertson, held in Edmonton a year ago and the AEHS board and annual general meetings scheduled the next day. Two well received issues of AjaKaja were published during the year. Approximately a dozen Albertans participated in the West Coast Estonian Days at Whistler, BC in the summer. A board meeting was held there and another in Calgary on Estonian Independence Day February 24, beginning with a pot-luck lunch on a blue-black-white themed table setting. The focus was on the creation of a new website, enhanced by two further meetings to hammer out precise page content. While a Calgary firm, ThinkTech is handling the design and technical aspects, various AEHS board members are providing the text and images. Later in the meeting, Ave demonstrated the partly completed website, to everyone's happy acceptance. Members were delighted to hear that long-time friend and supporter of the Alberta Estonian community, Morris Flewwelling is the recipient of an honorary from the University of Alberta this June. Some AEHS members met and hosted the Estonian biathlon team at its World Cup competition in Canmore in February.

Board member Dave Kiil successfully applied for monetary grants to aid development of our new website, publication of AjaKaja and other specified activities. The equivalent of CAD \$3800 has been



Kelly Schuler, new AEHS President and Ave Peetri, Past President

received from the Estonian Government. A second grant application was approved by the National Estonian Foundation of Canada

The AEHS is looking forward to its Summer Social this August 20 at Linda Hall, near Stettler.

We heartily welcome longtime AEHS member Kelly Schuler as our fourth president. Board member Kaidi Phypers resigned, being replaced by our former and first president Bob Tipman. Our president of the

past three years, Ave Peetri also resigned as she and her husband Kevin Ellis are relocating to Oman. She was honoured with a custom cake, coffee and many thanks during a break in the meeting.



President Ave Peetri and Board members at AEHS AGM, May 28, 2016

The elected board roster for 2016-2017: President Kelly Schuler, vice-president Helgi Leesment, membership director Lorne Hennel, secretary Rein Paasuke, treasurer Toomas Paasuke, directors Martha Munz Gue, Bob Tipman, Juri Kraav, Eda McClung and Dave Kiil.

AEHS welcomes new President! Kelly Schuler of Calgary, Alberta

Although a fifth-generation Alberta Estonian, Kelly thinks of herself as Estonian first and Canadian second. "...because we've been Estonians for centuries and only Albertan Canadians a short time, relatively speaking." Like an Estonian, Kelly thinks big picture and pays attention to fine details.



Kelly Schuler

"I look forward to inquiring how to best engage young people and elders of Estonian heritage, and invite all those in between to make our organization's services most interesting and relevant."

She mentioned she took on this role of the AEHS presidency based on the competency and efficiency of our dedicated board members. She feels her family has benefitted greatly from those who have been actively connecting the Estonian Community and we all have important part in contributing to our cultural growth.

Mother of two, her children aged 11 and 14 are used to accompanying her to board meetings and leadership

activities. Qualified with a bachelor of commerce degree and 20 years experience in business, organizational and community development, working with entrepreneurs, corporations, academic institutions and government, she works specifically with leaders dedicated to making the world a better place. She uses her communications skills and business acumen

to develop research, strategy and creative educational campaigns and events.

With a great passion for piano, having been a student for 10 years of Estonian Albertan Lydia Pals, who also taught her mother as a child, she has recently accepted the challenge to play in the Honen's ProAm competition in Calgary, November 19th.

"I am very excited about engaging with you and the year ahead with many cultural activities upcoming to foster Albertan Estonian connections...stay tuned!"



ALBERTA
ESTONIAN
HERITAGE
SOCIETY
INVITES YOU

SUMMER SOCIAL

2016

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20

11:00 am – 5:00 pm

Linda Hall, Stettler, Alberta

12 kms south on Highway 56 and 3 kms east on Linda Hall Road

AEHS members and guests welcome! **Admission by donation**

-
- Welcoming remarks
 - Tours of Estonian House at Stettler Town and Country Museum
 - Visit Estonian Pioneer Cemetery and 1906 Chapel near Linda Hall
 - Celebrate 25th anniversary of Estonia regaining independence
 - New AEHS website demonstration
-

SCHEDULE

11:00- 1:00 pm: Arrive, meet & greet,
local tours
1:00 pm: Welcome
2:00 pm: Potluck meal
3:00 pm: Website demo & entertainment
4:00 pm: Closing remarks & 50/50 draw
5:00 pm: Cleanup by AEHS volunteers

POTLUCK MEAL

Bring ready to serve food
Bring Heritage or Estonian food,
if possible
Bring your own cold beverages
Disposable eating utensils provided
Coffee and iced tea provided

EVERYONE WELCOME!

Stettler's Estonian Cemetery lovingly maintained by descendants

Theresa (Hennel) Campbell, Red Deer, Alberta

The Estonian Cemetery and 1906 Chapel are important to our family. My parents Allan and Rita Hennel, and my sister, brother and myself, are part of the Estonian Lutheran Cemetery and Chapel Society to ensure its continuous use for future generations.



Deane Kerbes and Allan Hennel at newly-installed fence at Estonian Cemetery near Linda Hall

The Estonian Cemetery, located on Linda Hall road, south of Stettler, Alberta is considered an important historic resource in Alberta and Estonian-Canadian history. Over 100 Estonian pioneer family members are buried there and it remains an active location for burials, although the Chapel, built in 1906, is no longer used. The Estonian Lutheran Cemetery and Chapel Society ensures the preservation and upkeep each year.

Without doubt, the Cemetery will see many visitors this year, especially during the AEHS Summer Social celebrations planned at Linda Hall for August 20, 2016. Allan Hennel, a descendant of one of the first Estonian pioneers in the area and current Chair of the Estonian Lutheran Cemetery and Chapel Society, has completed a map to indicate the names and locations of those buried there. This map now hangs in the Chapel and is a valuable historical record of the community. The benches will be varnished should visitors wish to take a moment to sit and reflect within the historic Chapel walls. An outdoor bench, in memory of Bunny (Hennel) Peterson has been placed with a clear view of the entire cemetery as well as the surrounding farmlands that sweep into the distance.



Interior of Estonian Chapel, built in 1906, with map of names and locations of people buried there



Wrought iron headstone at the Estonian Cemetery

AEHS receives two new grants in support of projects and activities



The Estonian Foundation of Canada (EFC) Board of Directors recently approved a grant application submitted on behalf of the AEHS. The funds will be sent to the AEHS in July 2016.

The funds will contribute to the development of a new AEHS website and help cover expenses incurred during Summer Social/Jaanipäev and the Estonian House at the Stettler Museum.

Since the formation of the AEHS in 2005, we've received significant financial assistance from the EFC in support of numerous heritage projects. AEHS members and friends are encouraged to donate to the EFC, thus ensuring the future of both the AEHS and the EFC. To donate contact: Estonianfoundation.ca or call: 416-465-5600. Your donations can be directed to AEHS projects!



The grant agreement with the National Archives of Estonia provides funds for “the collection of heritage materials about Alberta’s Estonian community” and their “distribution in digital and printed formats to Estonian communities worldwide”. The funds must be used by the end of 2016.

AEHS activities supported by the grant relate to the production and printing of two issues of AjaKaja in 2016, printing and distribution of “Alberta’s Estonian 115-year heritage website” and participation in the Baltic Heritage Network Summer School in Haapsalu, Estonia in 2016. These activities will increase awareness about the history of Alberta’s Estonian pioneers and later immigrants.

Morris Flewwelling recipient of Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree



AEHS congratulates Morris Flewwelling as recipient of a Hon. LL.D from the University of Alberta. This honor will be conferred during Spring Convocation ceremonies in June. Morris has had an extraordinary impact over his lifetime of public service as an educator, volunteer and civic leader. The Red Deer Museum, under his directorship, mounted a permanent display ‘Estonian Pioneers of Alberta’ which contributed significantly to awareness of our local history. Morris was Founding Director of the Heritage Community Foundation when AEHS launched its Alberta Source website in 2010. His support and involvement continued as we worked to preserve our history through successive heritage projects. The Flewwellings were Honorary Guests of AEHS at the Edmonton Consular Ball hosted by the Estonia in 2015. Morris was inducted in to the Alberta Order of Excellence in 2014 and appointed a member of the Order of Canada in 1997.

AEHS thanks Morris for his service to our community and extends its congratulations to a most deserving recipient.

AEHS Board Meeting

February 24, 2016

AEHS Board met at the home of Peter and Helgi Leesment in Calgary on February 24, 2016 and enjoyed a celebratory lunch to mark Estonian Independence Day. Ethnic designs decorated the table and the menu featured favourite Estonian foods.



AEHS Board members enjoying lunch and celebrating Estonian Independence

a new, user-friendly website that is accessible to the general public as well as a member's only section. Information on the current site will be retained.

All issues of AjaKaja from 1989 to 2015 have been digitized and will be included in the new AEHS website.

Discussion topics included the following:

Summer Social is planned for Aug. 20, 2016 at Linda Hall. (It happens to coincide with the 25th anniversary of Estonia regaining its independence). Plans are for a casual, one day event, with potluck meal. More information will be available following the AGM and will be shared with the membership and others. Everyone welcome.

It is hoped that the Stettler Estonian House will be restored and re-opened in time for the Summer Social. Plans call for the historic highway sign about Estonian settlers to be repaired and placed on display at the Estonian House. The historic Stettler Cemetery is being restored and will be available for tours.

Following discussion, it was agreed to accept the redesign of AEHS website by ThinkTech Consul-tants. The goal is to have

A grant application to the Estonian Government resulted in the approval of funds to support AEHS Heritage projects and continued production of AjaKaja. Two grant applications have also been made to the National Estonian Foundation of Canada to assist with development and maintenance of the new AEHS website.

Ave Peetri reported that the Banff International Film Festival will contact the Estonian Film Institute to determine if Estonian films could be considered for inclusion at the Banff Festival.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 28, 2016 from 1:00-4:00 pm at the Kerry Wood Nature Centre in Red Deer. Everyone is encouraged to attend and participate in planning the upcoming year.

The Hennel Family Tree: “*Eesti Mets*” in Stettler

Marion Collin, Airdrie, Alberta

Estonians! Who are these people! From a very young age I knew I was of Estonian heritage probably because right from birth to grade one, I heard Estonian spoken more than English. My maternal grandmother Marie Klaus came to live with our family when our dad Martin Hennel died tragically in 1954 leaving his wife Erna widowed with six children aged 18 years of age down to me, aged two months. Grandma Klaus understood only “selected” English. She selected what she wanted to hear. The rest was spoken and heard in Estonian. She looked after me while mom worked with her older sons farming.

My eldest brother recently wrote in my sixtieth birthday card “Lots has happened since I first saw you... but we made it didn’t we!” Yes, it was a rocky path but not anymore or any less than what many pioneer families went through. What gave our mother, my brothers, sister and other families the strength to carry on? I think it was the Estonian blood running through us all.

“I have a Dream” – a famous quote attributed to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. However I believe this quote had its start much earlier in the hearts of many Canadian pioneers and especially in the hearts and minds of the first Estonians to arrive in Canada in the late 1890’s and early 1900’s.

They risked everything to seek out the dream of freedom of language, freedom of religion, freedom to own their own property, to live free and prosper. The Hennel family

was only one of many strong Estonian pioneer families that strived and thrived.

As a Hennel, I too had a dream that was inspired by my cousins Rudolph and Edward Hennel, sons of William and Ida Hennel. (William was Kristjan Hennel’s son and my grandfather Joseph’s brother). In 1978 Rudolph and Edward were concerned that they and their brother Richard Hennel were the only siblings still alive out of a family of ten. Would the family history be gone when they were gone? The family tree dream began.

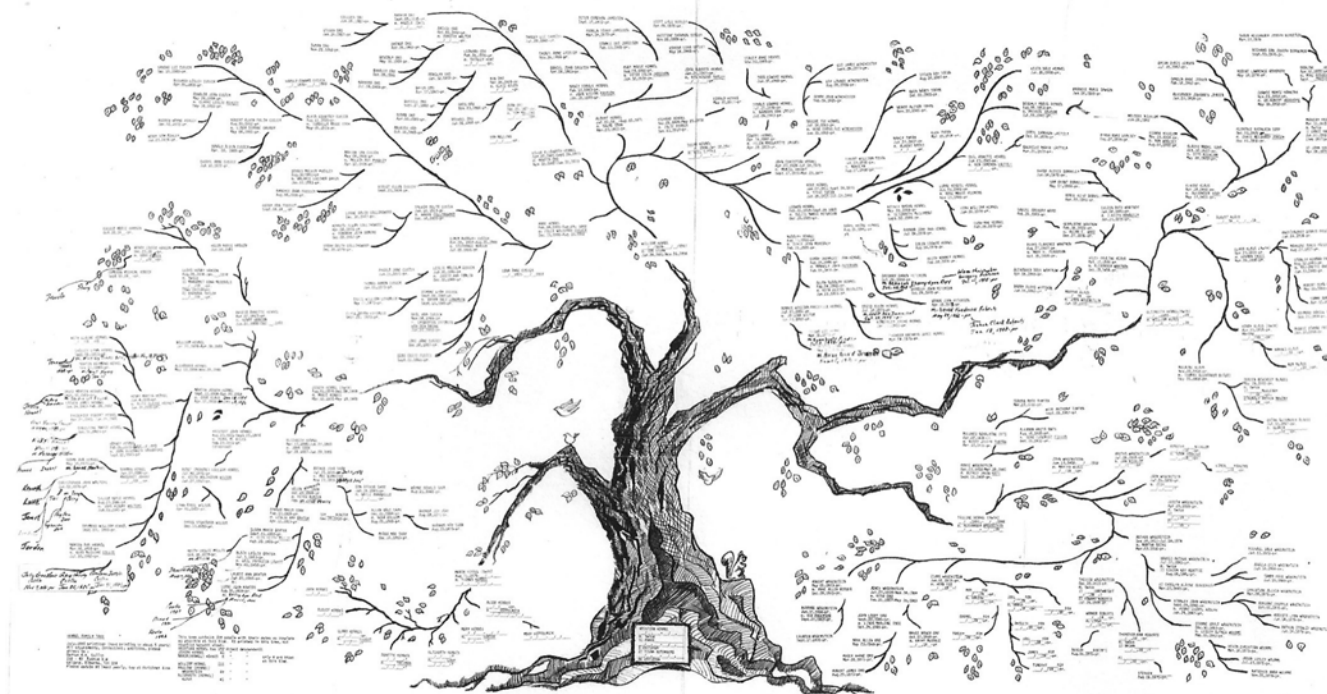
Of course the trunk of my tree started out with HENNEL relatives and with Kristjan Hennel.



Early Estonian Settlers — Grandfather Hennel and his wife, and their son William and family

Kristjan Hennel, Annie Hennel, son William and wife Ida, and their children, ca 1910

The Hennel, Klaus, Kerbes Family Tree (“Perekonna Puu”) was published in 1980 and celebrated with a family reunion that year at Linda Hall. As work continued on the “Tree” it became apparent that these three Estonian families were related to almost all of the over twenty Stettler area Estonian pioneer families.



Prepared by Marion Collin

Hennel Family Tree: “Eesti Mets”

This tree contains 376 people with their dates, as completed in 1980.

The tree shows the branches of the Hennel family:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| • Kristjan Hennel: 252 direct descendants | Joseph Hennel: 43 direct descendants |
| • Maria (Hennel) Kerbes: 8 “ “ | William Hennel: 11 “ “ |
| • Pauline (Hennel) Wagenstein: 49 “ | Elizabeth (Hennel) Klaus: 41 “ |

Thus what was a Tree suddenly branched into an Estonian Forest, “Eesti Mets”.

Surnames of Estonians that first settled in the Stettler area that I am aware of:

HENNEL, KLAUS, KERBES, SAAR, TIPMAN, ORO, NICKLOM, RAHO, KUDRAS, OLIVER, KOPAS, NEITHAL, WARTNOW, SOOP, MARTEN, WAGENSTEIN, MATHESAN, HANSBERG, JOHANSEN, POSTI, FRIDULIN, WATT, YURKIN, ASBERG, RADKE, KUUSIK (CUSICK), TIMMONEN

Not all of these pioneers stayed in the Stettler area, some “explored” further to British Columbia, United States of America and Australia. There is a lot of connectivity between these family names. Some were already related in Estonia. The connections grew even

more in Canada as the first generations born in Canada often married into other Estonian families. Possibly this was because of proximity (how far can you go courting on horseback?) or just the comfort of marrying someone sharing the same faith, language and heritage. Here are some of the Stettler “Eesti Mets” connections. I’ll start with HENNEL as a base, only because that is the thread that my knowledge of the Forest started with.

HENNEL

Kristjan HENNEL had two sets of twins and one “only”. His family line now boasts the only set of triplets in this family forest through his grandson Kristoff Hennel and his son Chris.

Kristjan & Annie HENNEL’s children – **JOSEPH, MARIA, WILLIAM, ELIZABETH, PAULINE.**

JOSEPH HENNEL (1875-1949)(twin) married Marie KERBES (1875-1946). In the spring of 1904 Joseph and his father Kristjan walked from Sylvan Lake where their families spent their first winter in Canada with the Mihkel Raho's and filed on their homestead SE 33-37-19 W4 in the Stettler area.



Martin Hennel, Alec Hennel, Mike Sococoa, Davie, Joseph Hennel, ca 1930

Joseph had six children, Elizabeth, Kristoff, Martin, Alexander, William, Rosetta Hennel.

Joseph's daughter Elizabeth HENNEL (1896-1969) married John SAAR (1887-1969) starting the connectivity between the Hennel and Saar families. John Saar's children Art and Helen were my god-parents at my Lutheran baptism and their sister Amanda kept an eye on my brother Henry as he attended the one room Wall Lake School with the Saar children. Martin and Erna valued education and sent their little six year old son Henry to spend the winters with his Saar cousins so that he would not miss any schooling.

Joseph's son Martin HENNEL (1904-1954) married Erna KLAUS (1910-1986) and through this Klaus connection came the six Hennel children mentioned earlier. They had Klaus cousins to play with, four of whom were almost exactly their own age. Lots of celebrations, lots of food. Traditional Christmas Eve meal at Erna Hennel's, Christmas Day at her brother Paul & Agnes Klaus's place and don't forget to wear that off before New Year's dining at Paul's daughter Evelyn and her husband Elmer Shursen's place.

MARIA HENNEL (1875-1915) (twin) married her sister-in-law Marie's brother Thomas KERBES (1867-1920). Thomas and Maria stayed in Estonia, but his brother Mike (Mihkel) KERBES came to Canada as did

his daughter Alide KERBES. Maria also had six children, Aleta, Maria, Elizabeth, Annette, Klara, August, Johannes Kerbes.



Erna (Klaus) Hennel, baby Amanda Saar (born in 1929), Alex Hennel, Elizabeth (Hennel) Saar and John Saar, ca 1929

Aleta(Alide) Kerbes (1894-1997) Married Martin Koppelmick. The Kerbes and Hennel connection that had started in Estonia continued with further marriage hook ups in Canada in the William Hennel line when Richard Hennel married Julia Kerbes.

WILLIAM HENNEL (1879-1917) married Ida STERN (1881-1956). He was the "only", no twin. He made up for it by having ten children! William homesteaded with his dad Kristjan on S.E. ¼ -28-37-19 W4. Kristjan Hennel went on to adventures in Australia and came back to Canada in his later years. This SE quarter section of land is still in the HENNEL name after 106 years and is farmed by William's grandson, great grandson & may well be farmed yet by his great great grandson Tallin. William's children are Anne, Hilda, Albert, Richard, Selma, Edward, John, Rose, Ludwig, Rudolph Hennel.



Front: Mother Liisa Oro, L to R: Sons Otto, Oscar, Alex, Mike and Martin, 1937

When William and Ida's daughter Hilda Elizabeth HENNEL (1901-1973) married Martin ORO (1896-1973) the family tree had its ORO connection. Martin was one of five Oro boys, Alex, Mike Oscar and Otto. Their mom was Liisa Raho, having married their dad John Oro (1867-1949). You can see how the Estonian tree branches are getting entwined as time goes on.

William's son Albert HENNEL (1902-1975) married Salme SAAR (1911-1994) and with William's son Richard HENNEL (1904-1978) marrying Julia (Julie) KERBES (1910-1987); this put a double knot on the Hennel to Saar and Hennel to Kerbes families.

ELIZABETH HENNEL (1881-1946) (twin) married Vilhelm (William) KLAUS (1875-1938) This union had connected the Hennel and Klaus families one generation earlier than the union of my dad Martin Hennel to Erna Klaus, my mom. Elizabeth's children are Martha, Hilda, Elvine, August, Clara, Henry, Melaine Klaus.

Elizabeth's daughters connected four more of the Estonian families to the Hennel family tree.

Martha KLAUS (1903-1987) married John WAGENSTEIN (1902-1958) (first cousins). Hilda Pauline KLAUS (1905-1981) married Alexander WARTNOW (1904-1976) and Elvine KLAUS (1908-1995) married Alexander SOOP (1901-1985). Their



Front: Jaan and Anna Klaus; Standing, L –R: sons William, Alex, Eduard, 1913



Alexander Wagenstein, 1916

daughter Gladys SOOP (1927-p) married Otto NICKLOM (1920-p). In one fell swoop Hennels were now related not only to the Klauses, but also to the Wagenstein, Wartnow, Soop and Nicklom families. Other family branches twining through here yet again was the Raho name as Alex Wartnow's sister Anastasia (Annie) Virginia Wartnow had married Oscar Raho. Another Wartnow sister Sophia married Johannes 'John' Kerbes, had four children and when she passed on in 1918, John married her younger sister Melaine 'Minnie' Wartnow and had five more Kerbes children. Talk about keeping it all in the family!

PAULINE HENNEL (1882-1944) (twin) married Alexander WAGENSTEIN (1876-1979)

Pauline's children are Annie, John, Jaan, Martha, Joseph, Arthur, Theresa, Clara, Agnes, Robert Wagenstein.

As mentioned above, Pauline's son John WAGENSTEIN had married his first cousin Martha KLAUS. I remember cousin Martha as having a good hearty laugh when she came to visit.

In this Wagenstein/Hennel union more connections were made to the Nicklom, Radke and Oro families through Martha WAGENSTEIN (1907-1964) marriage to Jaan NICKLOM (1899-1994); Arthur WAGENSTEIN (1911-1976) marriage to Martha RADKE (1916-2012) and Agnes WAGENSTEIN (1919-1964) marriage to Otto ORO (1907-1963)

Twin Pauline was a great grandmother to another set of twins through her daughter Clara Wagenstein's marriage to Herb Fox. Clara's grandchildren Joel and James were born in 1967, 85 years after their great grandmother (a twin) was born.

So you can see that the Kristjan Hennel descendants did their best to keep connected with other Estonians! They also did their best to populate their new homeland with Canadian Estonians by having six to ten

children each. Fortunately, there did not appear to be very many infant deaths.

Jaan KLAUS (1847-1924) married Anna Hummel (1844-1922) and had **JURI** (George), **VILHELM**, **ALEXANDER**, **EDUARD**, and **OTTO**.



Marie (Korge) Klaus

JURI KLAUS (1874-1949) married Marie KORGE (1884-1958). Juri arrived in Canada as a young man in 1902. It is said that he brought with him an axe and a gun. With these tools he cleared the land, put food on the table and sent for his wife in 1905. They had two children, Erna and Paul as mentioned earlier.

VILHELM KLAUS (1875-1938) has also already been noted as he married Elizabeth HENNEL (1881-1946)

Three other important connections come through the three other Klaus boys. **ALEXANDER KLAUS** (1879-1963) married Amanda **TIMMONEN** (1888-1935), brother **EDUARD KLAUS** (1884-1967) married Pauline **NEITHAL** (1891-1956) and **OTTO KLAUS** (1886-1965) married Olga **SOOP** (1884-1977). (Olga, Alexander and Elvine are all children of Jann and Ellu SOOP)



*Ado and Aletha (Klaus)
Tipman, ca 1940*

It was Otto Klaus's daughter Aletha KLAUS (1910-1999) that married Adolph **TIPMAN** (1905-1990), Magnus Tipman's son, thus linking another very prominent Estonian family name to the Eesti Mets. It is in the Tipman line that I have found the faint links that connect the Stettler Estonians with

the Eckville Estonians. Mikhel **TIPMAN** married Marl, and had three sons, **JOHAN**, **JOSEP**, and **MAGNUS**. Johan married Lena **ORO**, Josep's daughter Minnie married Anthony Fridulin and son Charlie married Helmi Saar. The Eckville connection comes through **MAGNUS TIPMAN's** (1868 – 1913) marriage to Sophia **RAHO** (1879-1920). Their son John **TIPMAN** (1894-1979) married Anna **POSTI** (1900-2001) and daughter Louise **TIPMAN's** (Mottus) (1896-1981), second marriage was to Leonard **KINGSEP**.

Kingsep and Posti are prominent Eckville Estonian names. Anna Posti is the daughter of pioneer August Posti.

KERBES children are many!



*Front row: Jaan and Annette (nee Hansman) Kerbes;
Back row: l-r: Elmer Kerbes, Elizabeth Kerbes, John Kerbes, Alvine Oliver, Rosanta Olson & Albert Kerbes.*

JAAN KERBES 1875-1953 married Annette Hansman (1875-1970). Their daughter Elvine **KERBES** (1911-2010) married Al **OLIVER** (1904 - 1945), son Albert (Bert) **KERBES** (1912-2004) married Rose **NICKLÖM** (1925-1998). I remember Bert's brother, Elmer Kerbes telling a story of their father enjoying the eating of an apple and then throwing the apple core into the yard. As far as I know there is still a fine apple tree growing west of Big Valley today.

JOHANNES (John) KERBES has already been mentioned as marrying two Wartnow sisters in succession and having 9 Kerbes kids. Go with what you know.

RAHO (Rahu) seems to have got translated upon arrival

in Canada as did many Estonian names being registered as more English than Estonian.

The RAHO name was already connected to the Tipman, Oro & Neithal names through **MIKHEL** Raho's sisters **SOPHIA** (Magnus TIPMAN), **MINNIE** (John NEITHAL) & **LIISA** (John ORO)

MIKHEL RAHO married Leissa, their children were **OSCAR**, **LIZZET**. Annie Wartnow (1906-2006) married **OSCAR RAHO** (1905-1989) and **LIZZET RAHO** (1918-1982) married **FRANK FRIDULIN** (1912-1988). Annie Raho visited often with her neighbor, my mom Erna Hennel. I remember admiring her beautiful necklace and finding that she had threaded together a string of rose bush berries to make her very colourful and lovely jewelry.

Gustav NICKLOM married Maria **KOPAS**, children **COST AUGUST** and **JAAN**. His children created Hennel and Kerbes connections through his son **AUGUST NICKLOM** (1889-1961) whose children Otto NICKLOM (1920- p) married Gladys Mabel SOOP (1927- p) and Rose NICKLOM (1925-1998) who married Albert KERBES (1912-2004). Gustav's other son **JAAN NICKLOM** (1899-1994) married Martha Wagenstein (1907-1964)

The Kopas sisters were busy linking Estonian families too. Pauline KOPAS married **ALEXANDER SAAR** (1877-1920) and their children connected the Hennel and Tipman families once more. Salme SAAR (1902-1994) married Albert HENNEL (1902-1975) and Helme SAAR (1914-2010) married Charlie TIPMAN (1908- 1979). see Tipman.



Nicklom family: Back, L-R: Johannes, Cost August, Joseph; Front, L-R: Maria (Kopas), Jaan and Gustav.

A page from Martin Hennel family album



Clockwise from top right: Erna and Martin Hennel wedding, 1934; Marion Hennel sitting on Grandma Marie Klaus's knee, April 1957; Back: Martin and Erna holding Henry (b. 1936) Hennel; Front: Henry, Harvey, Norman, 1946; Cousins Amanda, Helen Saar. Henry, Harvey, Norman, Erna and Sylvia Hennel, young Raymond Hennel in front, ca 1954; Erna Hennel going shopping, 1963; Erna and Martin holding baby Sylvia 1946

Epilogue

A family tree is actually a tree of love and friendship. Without the marriages between the Estonian families these connections would not be there. I grew up playing with a blonde neighbor girl named Karen that lived on the farm next to ours. We are friends to this very day and have a weekly call. It was on one of this calls that I told Karen that I had found out she was on my family tree. Yes, my father, a Hennel had married a Klaus, whose cousin had married a Tipman, whose cousin had married an Erickson, whose daughter had married a Skow. There it was, Karen and I are related. Love your neighbor as yourself, because we are all cousins.....



Marion Hennel, Karen Skow, 1960. Color insert ca 2002. (Photo prepared by Pearl Skow (Erickson))

There are more connections to be found especially with the Eckville Estonians and the list shown here only touches on the connections of a growing Estonian Family Forest. There are over 2000 names recorded to date. The importance of writing down the stories that have been passed down in your families cannot be stressed enough. Please get your family information to the Alberta Estonian Heritage Society to be recorded into family tree records and Alberta archives.

Canada gave many “dreamed of” freedoms to those original Estonian immigrants. For Canada, Estonians have brought and given back skills, music, knowledge and a huge pride in their new Canadian homeland

that continues generation after generation. The dream continues.....

Digitized Family Tree and 1906 cemetery map to be stored at PAA

The original Hennel ‘Family Tree’ was a paper version, measuring about 34” by 44”, prepared for a family reunion at Linda Hall in 1980. It was compiled by Marion Hennel and has been updated since then by her. The symbolic tree shown in the above article is a digitized version of the original. The tree is a remarkable historical record of a community and includes about 400 names, their date of birth, death and marriages.

The Stettler Pioneer Cemetery was established in the early 1900's as a resting place for early pioneer families and their descendants. A map of the grave sites has now been completed and is mounted inside the 1906 Chapel. It will

be digitized so that this valuable information can be accessed online.

Both the Family Tree and the Estonian Cemetery map will be available at the Provincial Archives of Alberta. (PAA).



PRESS RELEASE

WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT WILL COME ABOUT

Marion Collin Writes of Your Capability to Harness the Power of Your Thoughts

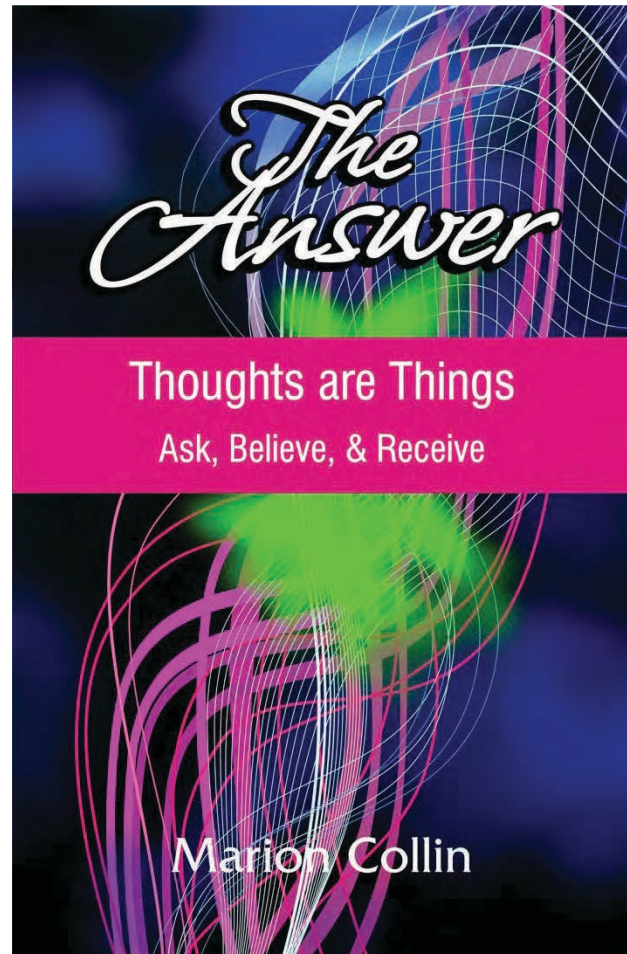


In today's Information Age where sharing thoughts is virtual, widespread, and instantaneous, it's easy to overlook the way thoughts impact ourselves and those around us. Marion Collin's new book, *The Answer: Thoughts are Things, Ask, Believe & Receive* examines the power and consequences of our thoughts and the role they play in everyday life – if you let them and if you work with your thinking.

The book is a philosophical exploration into human thoughts – how they're created, how they can be used, and how impactful they can be if used correctly. When some asks/prayers go unanswered, it's easy to wonder if such asks/prayers work at all. Collin shares her personal experiences in successful asking along with strategies for effectively turning thoughts into things. Integrating an interactive element, Collin prompts the reader to explore their own thoughts and asks them to write their own answers in the spaces provided throughout the book. Reading this book is intended to be motivational, thought provoking and an opportunity for spiritual exploration.

A recent note from a reader: "Hi Marion!!! How are you doing? I was going to wait until I was finished your book to message you, but I can't wait that long. I have been reading it very slowly and a couple of chapters over again. I must tell you that this is the first book that actually and logically explains God, Jesus, the Secret, our thought processes and makes sense to me. I look forward to finishing it and I

already plan to read it again!!! Thank you for this, Marion! Your book is amazing! Tracey.



The Answer: Thoughts are Things, Ask, Believe, & Receive by Marion Collin is available for order from most major online book retailers, including the FriesenPress Bookstore and Amazon. The eBook is available from Amazon Kindle, iTunes Bookstore, Chapters/Indigo Kobo, Barnes and Noble's Nook, and GooglePlay. The paperback version is now on the shelf at Chapters/Indigo, Cross Iron Mills mall near Calgary. Hardcover and paperback versions are also available from the author.

Contact

Marion@marioncollin.com
www.thoughtsarethings.ca

With his Hand to the Plow:

The Cost Nicklom Story

Lori Rose Reule, Big Valley, Alberta

Cost August Nicklom was the oldest of four sons born to Gustav Nicklom and Maria Koppas. He was born March 1, 1889 and as an adult seems to have gone by both Cost and August – I will refer to him as Cost. Cost's father served in the Czarist army for four years and it was said that Gustav did not see Cost for four years after he was born. Family history indicates that his father Gustav owned a farm in Pranti Mets, Nurmekunde Village and raised his family there prior to coming to Canada.

Could it be perhaps with her husband was called away to serve in the army and, being on her own, Maria went to stay with relatives or friends in Finland for the birth of her first child? An interesting mystery for further research.



Cost Nicklom with hewing axe

I'm sure Gustav's experiences in the Czarist army and the fact that he had four sons were factors in the family's decision to emigrate to Canada. Gustav, Cost (who would have been twenty years old) and another brother John came to Canada in 1909, with the rest of the family following later. In 1911 Cost applied for entry for a homestead in the eastern-most area of central Alberta. However, it appears that he did not follow through on establishing that homestead, but instead helped his father with the work required on Gustav's homestead which was situated just a couple of miles east of where the current Linda Hall building is today, south of Stettler, Alberta. Following is a quote from a letter written in 1975 by Cost's youngest brother Jaan: "[Our ancestors'] prime concern was for better living location or country and political climate, etc. requiring the ultimate strength and courage to immigrate to their chosen land, fortunately [for] our Nicklom clan. We can be proud and stand tall for my parents and especially my oldest bro. [Cost] who took a hold of the walking plow to plow prairie sod into a wheat field while my Dad was still out working to keep food on our table..."

Cost's dream of having his own farm began to be realized in September 1913 when he successfully applied for entry for a homestead located on NE 28-36-21 W4. This quarter section, located about 10 miles west and six miles south of Linda Hall, was very hilly, dotted with sloughs, and generously sprinkled with aspen and willow groves. The district itself is aptly named Wooded Hills. In later years, his son Rudy, who took over the farm, was known to utter a few choice words about his father having chosen to "crawl back here among the hills and bush" – the land in the Linda Hall area was much flatter!

The next couple of years were very busy ones for Cost. His 1916 affidavit supporting his application for his Homestead Patent indicates that by October 1913 he was residing on his quarter section.



Cost Nicklom built a log house in 1913 with several additions by 1916

He built a log house, cutting and milling his own logs from the trees on his land. The initial structure was a story and a half, measuring approximately 16' by 16'. He flattened metal cans, and used them for flashing on the roof. By 1916 he had added a barn, a hen house, an addition to the original house and

had dug a well by hand. He wintered 6 cattle and 2 horses that first winter, which had increased to 20 cattle and 5 horses by the fall of 1916. In 1914 Cost broke 15 acres of land and broke another 10 acres in 1915 and again in 1916. It was said that he had to search out pockets of flat land scattered throughout the quarter to try to find areas suitable for cultivation.

It was also during that busy year of 1914 that Cost met his future wife, Pauline Fuhrman, at John Krisby's christening party in Hanna, Alberta. Even though Pauline did not speak Estonian at that time, Cost must have been smitten with her as he continued to court her, travelling by bicycle, which was a one way trip of about 60 miles.



Cost with his bicycle

They were married in March 1915 and Pauline, who could speak six other languages, learned to speak Estonian so well that native speakers could not tell that she was not Estonian. Many of their older children did not learn to speak English until they went to school.

Fifteen children were born to Cost and Pauline during the course of their marriage. However, as with many pioneering families, tragically not all of their children lived to adulthood. By the time their fourth daughter Rose was born in 1925, they had 5 sons but had already lost three infant daughters. It is said that Cost was so protective of Rose that he would carry her around on

a pillow. Sadly, they lost one more infant daughter, but the following are their eleven surviving children: William, Carl, Otto (who was raised by his grandparents Gustav and Maria Nicklom, Julius, Henry, Rose, Olga, Ferdinand, Rudolph, Elizabeth and Verna.

There were other difficulties experienced by the young, growing family, not the least of which was trying to feed such a large family during those hard times. The kids talked about the many loaves of bread that their mom would bake each day, and it was not uncommon for school lunches to consist of lard sandwiches and a mason jar of preserved Saskatoon berries. Salt pork was a necessity, though generally despised, mainstay of the winter diet. In recording anecdotes about the family, daughter Rose wrote: "Sour milk was turned into cottage cheese and both kids and chicks were fed this". Nothing was wasted, although it does sound funny to our ears now to have the kids and the chicks lumped together! Given the struggle to keep food on the table, it must have been a heartbreaking day when Pauline stepped outside to find that the oxen had somehow gotten into her barrel of sauerkraut which was being kept in a cool place beside the porch, and had eaten the whole thing. Humorous now – probably not so funny then!



Cost and Pauline (Fuhrman) Nicklom, 1915



Nicklom family, 1946: Back row: L- R; Julius, Bill, Otto Carl, Ferdie, Rudy, Henry; Front row: L- R; Olga, Verna, Pauline, Cost, Betty, Rose

Most people described Cost as a quiet, reserved person. I believe his children were appropriately loath to raise his wrath – with 7 boys, one needed to keep a firm hand on the wheel. However, that didn't stop the kids from pulling pranks such as chasing the sheep through the hayloft to watch them "fly" out the loft door, drilling a hole in the corner of the wooden floor in the kitchen so when they had to wash the floor, they could easily just mop the wash water through the hole to the cellar below, or sawing the wooden handle off of the crank washing machine (I'm sure for some much needed project). In spite of all he had to handle at home, Cost was community minded. He served as postmaster and operated one of the first post offices in the area out of his home and he served as a trustee for the Wooded Hills school. He also played Santa for one of the school Christmas concerts, one of the most anticipated events in the community. He disguised

himself so well that his own children did not know it was their dad who was handing out the presents.

One by one Cost's sons moved away to start careers or farms of their own and his daughters got married. Otto, Ferdie and Rudy became farmers. Bill farmed for a time and did mechanic work. Carl was also a mechanic and first rate auto body repairman. Julius served overseas in the Canadian army during WWII, and became an engineer after the war. Henry also served overseas and then worked for Shell Oil for many years. Rose married next-farm neighbour, Albert Kerbes. Olga worked many years as a unit clerk in a Calgary hospital. Betty became a teacher and Verna followed her husband around the globe with his oil and gas career. Even though Cost would never become rich, he gave all of his many children the start they needed to make a successful life in Canada.



Four generations of Nicklom family in front of log house:

L-R: (relation to Cost in brackets): Sharon Nicklom (daughter-in-law), Kira Christofferson (great granddaughter) holding baby Tirzah (great-great granddaughter), Rudy Nicklom (son) and Lori Reule (granddaughter)

Cost died in December of 1961 at 72 years of age. He had expanded his holdings to five quarters of land and died working on his farm, having suffered a heart attack on a hill just a few hundred feet from his house. He had lost his wife Pauline just 16 months before and some people say he died of a broken heart. Interestingly, both he and his wife Pauline had the same pall bearers, five of whom were: Alex Soop, Ed Kerbes, Ado Tipman, Elmer Kerbes, and Alfred Klaus – a testament to the fact that the ties in the Estonian community remained strong.

At the time of this article, Otto, Betty and Verna are the only children still living – aged 96, 83 and 81 respectively. Of the original Estonian families who settled in the Wooded Hills district (Wartnow,

Tipman, Kerbes, Klaus, Krisby and Nicklom), only the Cost Nicklom family still has descendants living in the area; Rudy's children, son Rick and daughter Lori Reule and family, live on Cost's home quarter. The old log house is finally succumbing to the ravages of time, but I'd say 100 years is a pretty good run.

Lori Rose Reule spent the first two years of her life in the old log house and grew up on the Nicklom farm. After obtaining her law degree, she moved back to the farm with her husband Albert Reule and raised their family of five children, the last of whom was born on the farm, as were so many of Cost and Pauline's children. Lori practices law in Stettler, Alberta.

Sylvia Boehrnsen: Calgary Estonian Professional Artist

Helgi Leesment, Calgary, Alberta

Lucky are the persons who spend their lives working in a field they like. They are rare artists able to make a living from their art. Calgary Estonian Sylvia Boehrnsen is one such artist, a painter of international note. Two of her paintings: 'Early snow, Lac des Arcs, Alberta' and 'Malaysian Market' are featured on AjaKaja cover pages.

Sylvia Boehrnsen was born in 1926 on the north coast of Estonia in the village of Valkla, approximately 60 km east of Tallinn. She has happy childhood memories of playing on the beach and among surrounding trees in nearby Salmistu village with her older brother and friends. She is uncertain but believes at one time her mother and grandmother both worked at a nearby manor house. Later the family moved into Tallinn, living where the Linnateater Theatre is now located on Lai Street in Old Town.

As with hundreds of thousands of other Estonians, World War II brought terrible changes to the family. Sylvia left Estonia with her brother and mother in January 1941. Father had left earlier. The family thus missed the devastating bombings of Tallinn; nevertheless, they suffered various difficulties in German territory. They settled in Gdynia/Gotenhafen and Sylvia was able to briefly study languages at the University of Heidelberg, majoring in English. Her parents divorced and her brother died in 1942. On January 30, 1945 Sylvia and her mother were scheduled to board the huge ship *MV Wilhelm Gustloff* to sail from Gdynia/Gotenhafen to the West. A premonition resulted in mother refusing to go, despite knowing that the Red Army was



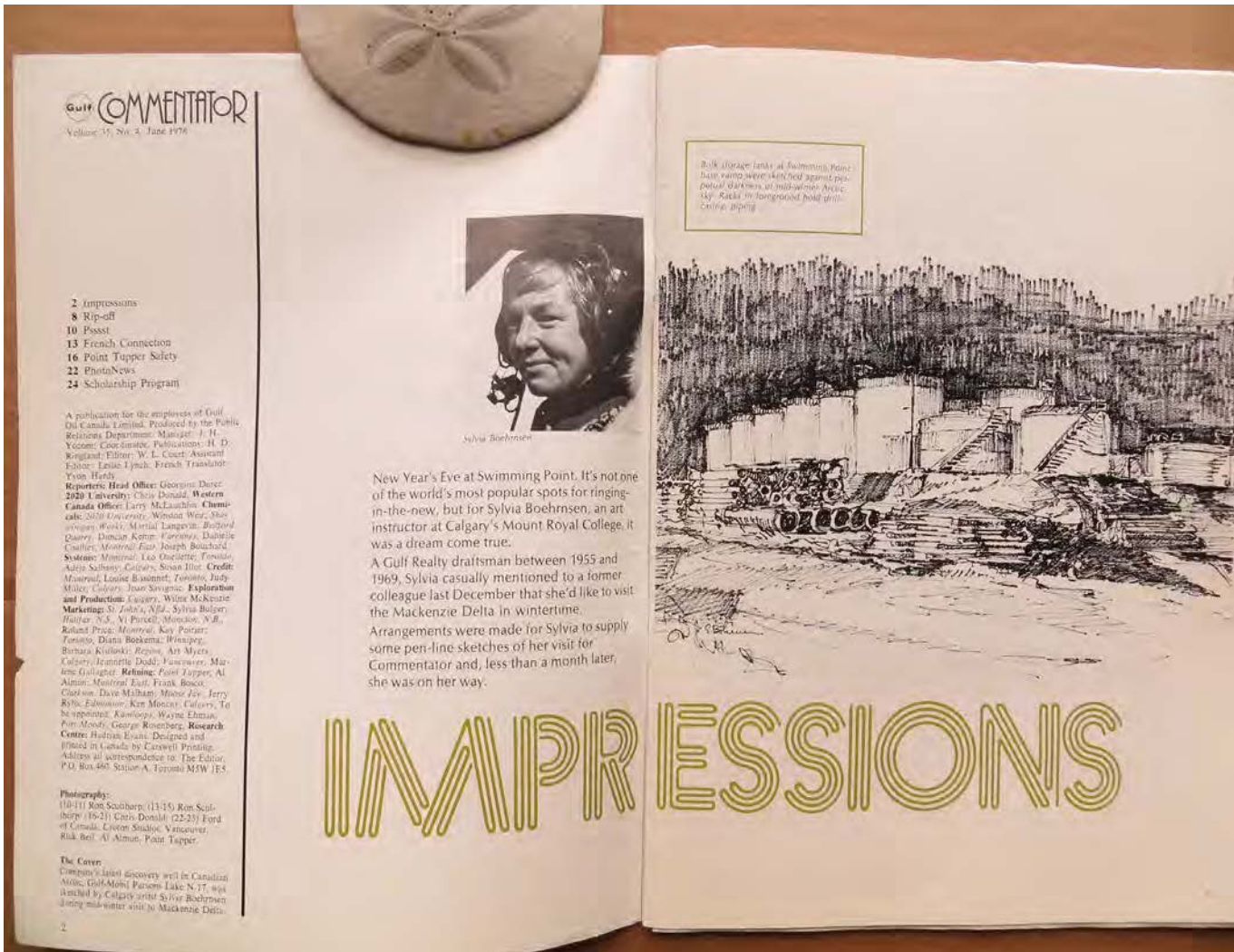
I walk alone
in an unknown world
towards a haunting light
that I can never reach
as I circle the campsite
with its bright lights behind me
I find myself
walking in my own shadow.

Sylvia Boehrnsen

approaching from the East. The same evening, the *Gustloff* was sunk by torpedoes from a Russian submarine. Upwards of 9000 people drowned, more victims than in any marine disaster.

After a harrowing escape from Gdynia by trains in chaotic wartime conditions, mother and daughter arrived in Schwerin, located just inside the border of future East Germany. In 1945 when World War II ended, Germany was governed in different sectors by the victorious armed forces of Britain, France, USA and USSR. It was generally known that the forthcoming Potsdam Conference would formalize those borders and allocate a larger portion of territory to the USSR. Thus, Estonian refugees in the area knew they had to find a way

westward yet again or be arrested in Schwerin and be punished by the Soviets for having departed their country. Sylvia managed to arrange army trucks for approximately 30 Estonians, enabling them to leave just before the Russians arrived to start claiming their new territory. Safely resettled with her mother in Luneburg, in the British Zone, Sylvia worked as a translator and administrative assistant for the British Military Government. Despite all the post-war tensions and discomforts in the Luneburg army barracks where they were housed, the small Estonian group wanted to celebrate Jaanipäev. They sent Sylvia as emissary to obtain special permission for the bonfire from the Camp Commander. Mission accomplished, Jaanipäev duly celebrated! Later the duo moved to Frankfurt where Sylvia worked as an emigration officer for the Lutheran World Federation, a position which enabled her to arrange her own and her mother's



Article about Sylvia Boehrnsen in Gulf Canada Resources magazine

Mother and daughter came directly to Brooks, Alberta and shortly afterwards to Calgary when it became clear the Bank of Nova Scotia would not promote Sylvia or other women beyond position of teller. Sylvia obtained employment as an information clerk at the Palliser Hotel by boldly phoning the office manager long distance all the way from Brooks, an astonishing and very expensive act at the time. While working there, Sylvia met Calgary Estonians Linda Nemeth, Inge Riesenkauff-Zach, Evely Danyluk and Martha van der Bellen, all of whom belonged to the Calgary Estonian Society and attended its functions. When Martha van der Bellen moved out of the province, Sylvia and her mother gladly took the offer of renting her apartment. At the

time, rental accommodation was difficult to find. When Sylvia realized the hotel would not promote women to room clerk at the front desk, she left and became a receptionist at Gulf Canada Resources where she sometimes chatted with Estonian geologist Oscar Erdman. Sylvia took courses in survey and architectural drafting at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology and stayed with the company as a draftsman until she became aware that women were never promoted to the position of chief draftsman. Taking leaves of absence from her job, Sylvia studied painting at the University of Calgary, graduating in 1972 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Her second degree, in 1974, is Master of Arts in German literature, also from Calgary. She

instructed German at the University of Calgary and drafting, art and rendering for interior design at Mount Royal College as a part-time sessional instructor.

In 1976 Gulf Canada Resources sent her to the Arctic to sketch drilling activity in the MacKenzie River Delta. That was the launch of Sylvia Boehrsen's career as a self-employed artist.



Mountain scene "Early snow, Lac Des Arcs, Alberta"

By the following year she had solo showings of her art at the University of Calgary and the Peter Whyte Gallery in Banff. Quite a feat for a new artist. Many more solo and group shows followed over the next three decades. She is the subject of many Alberta media articles.

After that first visit, Sylvia's attraction to the Arctic remained. She made a total of seven visits, depicting watercolour scenes of eroded hills, jagged ice, windblown snowdrift patterns, stark ships and contrasting soft Arctic skies. These Arctic visits were interspersed with travel to the South Pacific, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, Africa and the US, which extended her range of colour and included markets, costumes and animals among her images. In all her art, she interprets the mood and structure of the surroundings and landscape, atmospheric conditions, rock formations, light and colour

vibrations, extreme contrast as well as subtle gradation.

Her talent was noticed by businesses and various institutions who purchased her works, including: the Universities of Calgary and Saskatchewan, Mount Royal and Grant McEwan Colleges (both have since become universities), major local hospitals, law firms, real estate companies and energy corporations such as Gulf Canada Resources, Esso Resources, Chevron Canada Resources, Nova Resources, Petro-Can as well as the Alberta Art Foundation. Sylvia Boehrsen is represented in private collections in Canada and abroad. Her watercolour art can currently be found on European and Canadian art dealer and auction websites.

Sylvia Boehrsen has now retired in Calgary but formerly spent many years where the Alberta Foothills meet the Rocky Mountains, in the hamlet of Lac des Arcs where she and a friend designed and built a cottage. That setting was a major inspiration for her many paintings of mountains in their varying moods, waterfalls and trees, all with her own exacting style, influenced by her Estonian childhood spent largely in nature, her love of challenging outdoor locations and her draftswoman background - a unique combination of experience, talent, creativity and skill.

When asked why she painted, she replies „Painting to me is self-realization and communication of personal perceptions, experiences and feelings. It presupposes freedom of choice to communicate what is relevant to me at the time...The effective use of visual art is to evoke an emotional response, a state of recognition and hopefully some understanding in the viewer. Painting has helped me to create my own life style and environment in which to set my own standards and pose my own challenges.“

Despite the harsh early years, her's is a fortunate life indeed. She was an exceptional lady!

Tere, members of Alberta Estonian Heritage Society, from Tartu!

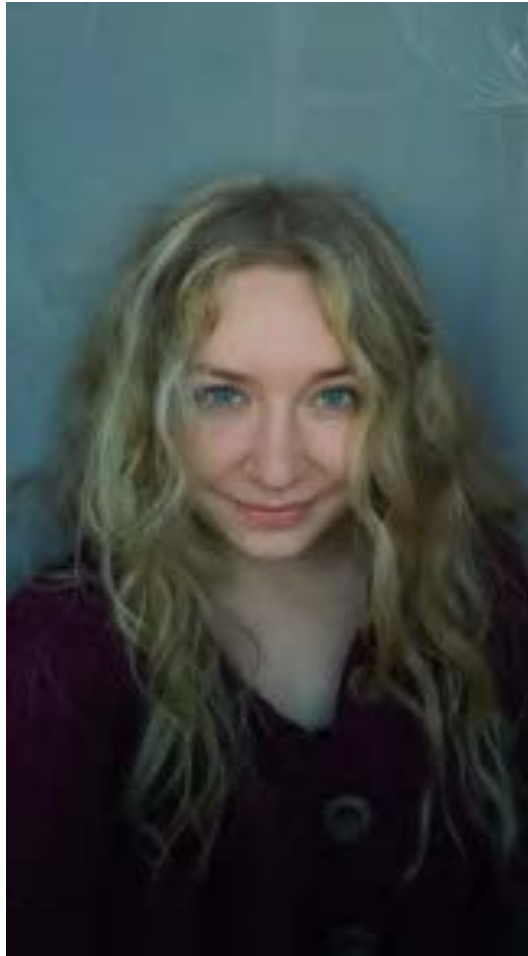
Keili Kase, Tartu, Estonia

My name is Keili Kase. I am a student from the mystical land of Estonia. It's my second year at the most prestigious university in my homeland, University of Tartu, where I am working toward a Bachelor's degree in History and International Relations.

About a year ago, I received an e-mail from my aunt in Calgary who was looking for a young Estonian to introduce the culture and language to them. This opportunity sounded thrilling! A chance to present my homeland, from my point of view and to meet spirited Canadians! This is how I ended up in Calgary for six months.

For a few months before coming to Canada, I started to think of ways to connect my final research paper to my stay in Canada. I have always had an interest in Estonians outside of Estonia: what do they think? How do they feel about this tiny land so far away? So I discussed with one of my lecturers the possibility to start my research in Canada, specifically Alberta. I planned to interview people of differing generations who have Estonian roots, including early arrivals like the pioneers, WWII refugees and more recent immigrants, and then compare their 'Estonianess'.

I struggled with the exact match for the meaning of *eestlus*, it was a tough nut to crack. But after consideration, decided to stick with 'Estonianess'. Luckily most people got the meaning.



This has been a wonderful experience for me. I have completed 20 interviews and asked a total of 400 questions. Interviews have taken place via Skype, over the phone or in person. Many have invited me into their homes. This has been a real joy! I have heard unique stories and thoughts about the present and past. Overall, I am positively surprised at the warm attitude toward my research and the willingness of people to participate.

I have viewed historical documents, family photos and interesting objects connected to Estonia, such as art, home furnishings, national clothes, jewellery, and even tattoos. I attended the AGM of the AEHS in Red

Deer and see a strong sense of belonging in this community. Most every person I have interviewed has said the word 'proud' more than once during our conversation. As a young Estonian coming here, I am amazed and even more proud to see such respect and determination to keep Estonianess alive.

I have heard such interesting opinions and ideas that I can't wait to share my research findings with you. A grateful thank you to all the participants who took time to contribute to my study. I hope my findings will have some positive input for your group as well.

If you wish to be interviewed about your Estonianess, please feel free to contact me. I will be in Calgary until the end of July. E-mail: keiliks8@gmail.com; phone: (403) 257-2431. Warmest regards to all.

“Who ya gonna call?”

Aino Evelyn Erdman, Home Economist Extraordinaire

Helgi Leesment, Calgary, AB and Martha Munz Gue, Medicine Hat, AB

Aino Evelyn Erdman was an esteemed home economist. For 33 years she presided as director of Canadian Western Natural Gas and ATCO firms' Blue Flame Kitchen, Alberta's most famous kitchen. There she was considered “The Blue Flame Economist Extraordinaire” and was sometimes called “The Professor” by her colleagues because of her superb teaching abilities. Prior to this lengthy career in Calgary, she had applied her teaching skills as an instructor at the University of Alberta in Edmonton where she was known for setting difficult exams. She was also a qualified dietitian employed for a time at the hospital in Medicine Hat.

Evelyn Erdman died in Calgary in December 2015. The following month, her relative Martha Munz Gue organized a gathering to honour her. Guests included many relatives from across Canada plus former colleagues and younger employees who did not work with Evelyn but came to pay tribute to her legendary knowledge and skills. Evelyn's late husband Dave Rimmer died in 2006 after their 10th wedding anniversary. Her two brothers also passed away a few years before her. She had no children. Her brothers' children (three daughters raised in Vancouver and four sons raised in Ottawa) were her treasured nieces and nephews.

Evelyn was born in December 1930 in Barons, southern Alberta, where many other Erdman relatives and other Estonians operated farms at that time. The three siblings were raised on quite a self-sufficient farm. Their parents grew, preserved and prepared food not only for their



Photo: Evelyn Erdman Collection
Aino Evelyn Erdman, ca 1965

own family but also for the hired help whom they treated like members of the family. As a young girl, Evelyn learned to bake bread and cakes daily. She also milked cows, tended the vegetable garden and did much that a farm demands. Possibly this background motivated her to attend the Faculty of Household Economics at the University of Alberta where she earned her Bachelor degree in 1951.

Education was held in high esteem in the family as both of Evelyn's brothers also became top specialists in their fields. Ilmar Ernst Erdman developed international food hygiene standards in Ottawa earning several international awards. Karl Lembit Erdman researched and taught nuclear, particle and applied physics at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver where he was one of the active leaders of the TRIUMF cyclotron accelerator project.

Evelyn's native language in her childhood home was Estonian as her father Gus J Erdman (known locally as GJ, or “big Gus”) immigrated to Canada together with two sisters, Alide and Helene, and his parents, Siim and Pauline Erdman, from the Paide area of Estonia in 1910. Her mother Linda Jurman arrived from the nearby Põltsamaa region in 1921. The couple met in Barons and married in 1924 at a double ceremony where Gus's sister Alide was married to Gus Kulpas. Their farmsteads were across the road from each other, west of Barons. Evelyn's grandparents, Siim and Pauline Erdman also lived with them to the end of their lives. GJ's sister Helene died soon after the family arrived

in Barons in 1910. She had contracted typhoid fever on the long journey by boat and train from their home in Estonia.

Evelyn began to learn English upon entering the local elementary school. She retained her knowledge of Estonian to the end of her life, using it in her senior years mostly with her mother whom she looked after in their home. In 1967 both had an opportunity to use their mother tongue exclusively on their trip to Estonia to visit relatives there. The draw of family was so great that mother made a second trip on her own in the 1970s.

At first religious education was by radio. "The Lutheran Hour" provided mail-order Sunday school lessons which the family used. When the children reached school age, Evelyn's father decided that it would be better to integrate with others in the community so the family began attending the Barons United Church.

Because the Erdman farm folks spoke Estonian as well as English, many Estonian World War II refugee immigrants in the late 1940's to 1950 were welcomed for their required one year of living with a sponsor. Here the recent arrivals had work, meals, a roof over their heads, and an opportunity to learn English as well as something about life in Canada before eventually departing for their new lives elsewhere in this country. Several other Estonian farm families throughout Alberta accorded the same kindness to wartime compatriot refugees.

The Erdman extended family, once closely domiciled in southern Alberta has spread to locations all over North America. Since the

arrival of the first known Estonian Erdman couple in 1904 to Barons, there have been approximately 170 related Erdmans on this continent. Evelyn was among the last of those who spoke the Estonian language fluently.

The major part of Evelyn's career was spent at the Blue Flame Kitchen from 1953 to 1990. There the staff developed new recipes for gas stoves, presented recipes to various print media, compiled recipe books and demonstrated food preparation techniques. Upon the arrival of new appliances such as deep freezers and later microwave ovens, southern Albertans were grateful to Evelyn Erdman for usage guidance.

Her fame grew quickly when the regional CBC radio network hired her for their lunchtime program *Cross Country Check-Up* and *Wild Rose Forum*. She began her part of the show with a short introduction to a food item or preparation method, then opened the telephone lines for questions. Evelyn had a particularly pleasant sounding voice, a resonating alto timbre, which carried authority -- in the positive sense. Nothing fazed her. She always had a reply, even when her friends or colleagues occasionally challenged her on the radio (anonymously, of course) with an artificially complicated question to see if she could be stumped. Evelyn remained

cool and calm even on occasions when listeners asked the same question for the third time during the same broadcast. As may be imagined, to natural gas customers in southern Alberta, Evelyn Erdman "was the gas company".

Evelyn made presentations for television, on other radio stations and most frequently at demonstration kitchens. On occasion, she would

Estonian celebration for Alberta's birthday

We often hear about the "family" men and women who settled Alberta at the turn of the century. But when you are a son or daughter of a pioneer, it's hard to recreate how they felt, the sense of excitement and joy that came with new arrivals and celebrations when work was put aside for a day and all the best of food and drink was brought to a common table.

I talked to Evelyn Erdman, director of the Blue Flame Kitchen at Canadian Western Natural Gas about her pioneer family. Her mother and father emigrated from Estonia in the early 1900s, and here, married, homesteaded and raised their children in Barons.

They left Estonia, like many Europeans, to start a new life. They had a history of war and oppression and managed to preserve their culture, language and, of course, their foods.

In honor of Alberta's 50th birthday, here is the traditional Estonian birthday cake.

Unlike the butter cakes so often associated with birthdays, this "cake" is actually an egg-rich, custard-sweetened yeast bread. And true to Alberta's reputation, it's done up in a big way to serve a crowd.

Birthday is a great time of importance in the Estonian community. It was also a perfect time for everyone to celebrate, and old songs, toast each other and exchange for a group photograph -- over the years, to the group expanded, he has come higher up the porch steps.

For the first try, I would recommend making two cakes from the one recipe. It's easier to shape and bake, and one could be served for a later meal. Before you start, plan a baking day when you will be home or have working around the house.

Although you don't have to say aloud to the kitchen, there are two times you should say: when the bread is rising to bake and during the latter part of baking.

Start early in the morning on the day before to avoid last minute panic. If any cake is left, wrap and store in a covered tin at room temperature to prevent drying. Serve toasted with butter, preferably unsalted. Or freeze in advance and thaw on the day of serving.

Estonian Birthday cake

(also used for other important celebrations)

3 packages active dry yeast (you can use less successfully, but 3 packages, but it takes longer to rise with so many eggs)

1 teaspoon sugar

10 cup lukewarm water (105 to 115°F)

10 cup lukewarm milk (105 to 115°F)

about 8 cups all purpose flour

5 whole large eggs (or 7 medium)

1 can vanilla sugar (see recipe) or

1 cup granulated sugar and

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 to 3/4 teaspoon powdered saffron (for flavor and pink color)

1 to 1 1/2 teaspoons crushed cardamom seeds (optional, white pods. Seeds preferred to ground cardamom.)

1 cup butter (unsalted preferred, cut into small bits and softened)

1/2 cup soft butter

1/2 cup soft butter

1/2 cup soft butter

1/2 cup soft butter

1. In a warm medium-sized bowl or 2 cup measure, dissolve the yeast with the teaspoon of sugar in the 10 cup lukewarm water; let stand for 2 or 3 minutes, then stir to dissolve yeast completely. Set aside for 10 minutes until bubbly.

2. Measure 1 1/2 cups of flour in a large or bread bowl, combine the 1/2 cup lukewarm milk with enough of the 1/2 cup of flour to make a sticky paste. Add the dissolved and bubbly yeast. Add what remains of the measured flour and beat well to make a stiff batter. Cover with a cloth or plastic wrap and let stand in a warm, draft-free place to rise to double in bulk.

(This is an extra step called a sponge. While it is not mandatory, it gives you the time to organize the rest of the ingredients and arrange the yeast in fully active and well-developed before the eggs, fat and spices are added.)

3. In a separate bowl or large measuring cup, beat

FOOD

JOANNE GOOD

Article in Calgary Herald, August 27, 1980, by Joanne Good, a colleague of Evelyn Erdman's at the Blue Flame Kitchen where they worked together for many years



Photo: Calgary Her

Evelyn Erdman at the Blue Flame Kitchen, ca. 1965

would feature Estonian foods on the radio as well as in the *Calgary Herald* newspaper.

In addition to all the talents describe above, Evelyn played the piano and organ. During her high school years, she was organist at the Barons United church, part of a tradition of several Erdmans, one after another, holding that position. She also excelled at handicrafts, doing knitting, embroidering, rug weaving, crocheting and sewing; always to shining perfection. On her bookshelves were hundreds of handicraft magazines, including issues of *Triinu*, the Estonian language handicraft and culture magazine published for years alternately in Sweden, Canada and the USA. She also owned bilingual cookbooks and Estonian poetry collections. In 1984 she was nominated as a YWCA 'Woman of the Year'. Despite her vast capabilities, Evelyn was not all seriousness: we

are told she was actually able to play a tune on a whistling teakettle! She was a member and supporter of the Alberta Estonian Heritage Society, contributing to its *AjaKaja* magazine as



Evelyn Erdman and Martha Munz Gue, Jaanipäev, Linda Hall, 2009

recently as last summer. It is worth noting that in a wall display of ATCO leading personnel photos, Aino Evelyn Erdman is the only woman among approximately 20 directors of her time.

Anything Aino Evelyn Erdman undertook, was done thoroughly with excellence, good humor, and kindness. She was an exceptional lady!

LIFE TODAY

Zesty shallots C2

Sikh diet suspect C4

Low-cal goodies C5

Calgary Herald

FOOD

Editor: Mark Tremblay

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, 1988



Linda Green was behind an avalanche of chocolate gifts from QCO. **C7**

Comics C10

Classified C11

Weather C20

Photography: Bruce Stoilesbury



TESTING: June Davis, left, Sharon Cummins put recipe through paces

'Who ya gonna call?'

Blue Flame Kitchen may have the answer

By Cynny Willet

Who ya gonna call when your scratch cake falls, your bread won't rise and the lid pop off your pork loin?

When things go wrong in the kitchen, call 243-7721 and ask for Evelyn Erdman, that's who.

Erdman is director of the Blue Flame Kitchen at Canadian Western Natural Gas Co. and supervises a staff of seven (in both Calgary and Lethbridge) dedicated to solving all kinds of culinary questions.

Questions like, "How do you tan rabbit skin?" — from a rabbit rancher who didn't know what to do with all the leftover pelts. Or "How come my egg whites turned purple?" — from someone who had problems with the toxic metal leaching through the finish in her toasters.

Last year, over the phone, Erdman's team handled approximately 33,500 kitchen and household inquiries. Many of those, Erdman can answer right off the top of her head, as she does approximately four times a year on the call-in CBC radio show, Wild Rose Forum.

Add that to other Blue Flame projects, which include a weekly CBC radio spot, seasonal cooking classes, and the monthly preparation of recipe pamphlets, plus the annual Christmas recipe booklet, and you'll understand why the Blue Flame Kitchen is an invaluable reference for so many Calgary cooks.

"We get lots of cooking questions

related to special problems that occur because of our high altitude," says Erdman. "And we often hear from men taking a turn in the kitchen."

"Each season generates very specific questions," adds staff member and home economist Sharon Cummins. "There are a lot of turkey questions at Christmas and barbecue questions in the summer. We get cunning and preserving questions all year long."

"People who call because they've lost a recipe," says Erdman. "We'll do our best to find it. We've got about 19,000 tested recipes on file, which includes recipes we've developed ourselves, plus clippings from newspapers and magazines, and product advertisements that go back to the 1930s. We also have nearly 200 cookbooks to refer to."

Not all the questions are recipe related. People call with all sorts of household problems, like how to get lipstick off a sweater or crayon off the walls, plus questions about sewing or plants. One of the most frequently asked questions is how to make soup.

And if you're convinced your question is too dumb to ask.

"There is no such thing," says Erdman. "If you don't know something, it becomes a problem to you. And besides, you don't have to identify yourself on the phone."

The only questions Blue Flame won't answer are nutrition or health related (which are referred to health professionals) and questions about rage.

"Carpeting is so expensive and the



CLOSE AS PHONE: Evelyn Erdman and staff of seven responded to nearly 34,000 questions last year

new fibres so complex, we won't deal with that issue on the phone," says Erdman.

The Blue Flame Kitchen will also send a speaker to groups of 25 or more, and will even make house-calls to gas customers requiring help with new appliances in service not required that frequently anymore, but which was the motivating reason for Canadian Western Natural Gas Co. to open the home services department in 1978.

Blue Flame is currently taping a 31 part TV series called the Perfect Setting and has just recently published the first of a series of five cookbooks. Called 75 Favorites, the book is available for \$9.95 by mail or pickup from the downtown, Midnapore or Lethbridge offices, as well as certain local supermarkets.



HOME STRETCH: CBC host Sharon Edwards, left, Cummins on the air

Reflections on my life and career on several continents

Kaljo Pohjakas, Lethbridge, Alberta

Kaljo Pohjakas was born in Tallinn, Estonia in 1923 and graduated with a BSA (Major in Agricultural Mechanics) in 1951. He returned to UBC in 1957 and obtained an MSA (Soil and Water Management) in 1959.



Kaljo Pohjakas

“After receiving my MSA degree in 1959, I joined the Agriculture Canada Research Branch at Swift Current, Saskatchewan as a soil and water research scientist until 1967. From 1967-1971, I was employed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN in Iran as a water management advisor to the Soil Institute of Iran.

Upon completing this four-year assignment, I returned to Canada where I continued as a research scientist with Agriculture Canada in Lethbridge, Alberta. One year later I was called again by the FAO to work in Malaysia as a senior water management advisor from 1972-1974 with the Malaysian Agriculture Research and Development Institute. Two years later I joined a Canadian CIDA project in Indonesia, developing a comprehensive development plan for three provinces. At the conclusion of the assignment I returned to Canada and joined the Agriculture Department of the province of Alberta. Until my retirement in 1988, I was branch head responsible for land classification, mostly determining land suitability for irrigation in Alberta.

In 1988, I was offered another two-year position with CIDA in Egypt, improving soils in the Nile delta and helping to increase agricultural production. After that assignment I worked for CESO (Canadian Executive

Service Overseas), assisting the Estonian government in modernizing land inventory and management programs”.

Kaljo Pohjakas retired in 1988 and, with wife Lilian, resides in Lethbridge, Alberta. They have two daughters, Lea and Tiina.

Early Life:

Kaljo Pohjakas was born in 1923 in Tallinn. He lived on his family farm at Raasiku and attended schools in Tallinn until he graduated from the Gustav Adolf Gymnasium in 1942. He ignored the Soviet Conscription order in 1941 and also avoided a similar German one in 1943. Instead he escaped to Finland and joined the Finnish Navy and transferred to the Army in 1944 when an Estonian regiment was formed. When the regiment went to Estonia to fight the Soviets he was wounded in battle at Pupastvere and went to Germany for medical treatment. His wound did not heal until after the end of the war.



Front row left: Kaljo Pohjakas at Baltic University in Hamburg, Germany, 1940's)

Since 1945 Mr. Pohjakas lived in a displaced persons camp in Flensburg and beginning in 1946 he enrolled in the Baltic University associated with the University of Hamburg studying agriculture. In 1947, he immigrated to Canada under a 10 month labor contract working for the Longlac Pulp and Paper Company cutting pulpwood. When the contract ended in 1948, he travelled to Winnipeg and finally Vancouver where he met and married Lilian Luts in 1949. When in BC, he worked in the Pioneer Gold Mine and was accepted into the UBC Faculty of Agriculture. His academic credits from Germany enabled him to receive his Bachelors Degree in three years in 1951 during which time Lilian and Kaljo also welcomed their first daughter, Lea. After that, he worked as an engineering

associate at the Kemano Hydro project and for two other engineering companies.



***Lumberjacks in Longlac, Ontario camp, 1948.
Kaljo Pohjakas in front row, left side.***

He returned to UBC in 1957 and received his Masters degree in 1959. While in Vancouver he and Lilian were active within the Estonian community and Kaljo was involved with establishing the post war Vancouver Estonian Society. There he also joined the Estonian fraternity Rotalia and has been a member ever since.

Shortly after, he received an offer to join Canada Department of Agriculture Research Branch in Swift



***Pohjakas family, 2016
Lilian and Kaljo (seated back row), daughters Lea and Tiina (seated far right) with
children and grandchildren***

Current, Saskatchewan as a research scientist specializing in soil and water management research. During this time their second daughter, Tiina was born. After eight years, he was offered a position in his specialty by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN in Iran where he and his family lived for four years, establishing eight

research stations and training local personnel. When the four **year** contract concluded, the family returned to Canada, this time to the Lethbridge Research Station where Kaljo conducted irrigation research.



Kaljo and Lilian Pohjakas at Jaanipäev, 2007

After a year, he was offered another position by F.A.O. as a senior advisor to the Malaysian Agriculture and Research Development Institute in Kuala Lumpur. There he initiated different water management programs and two research stations. While in Malaysia, he was recruited by C.I.D.A to work with a group of Albertans developing plans for three Indonesian provinces. When the assignment was completed in 1976, the family returned to Lethbridge, this time working for Alberta Agriculture as a researcher and later Head of the Land Classification Branch responsible for conducting all irrigated land classifications in Alberta.

While in Lethbridge, the family met and associated with Ralph Erdmann, Harta and Leo Niilo, Arne and Wilma Nirk, and Aime and Karl Lilleniit. As there were few Estonians, no formal organization was formed. After retirement in 1988, he worked two years in Egypt as a C.I.D.A. specialist

improving land in the Nile delta. Currently retired, he lives in Lethbridge with his wife Lilian. Daughter Lea also lives in Lethbridge as an educator and former 2 term School Board member. Tiina lives in Kamloops and is a government lawyer and operates a small livestock ranch.

Ah....to be Estonian....

Stephanie Ustina, Victoria, British Columbia

It's just over five years ago, 2011 and I'm on my way to a photography shop down the street from the building the Estonian consulate uses when in Vancouver. It's early afternoon but the streets are dark, grey as pewter, and my head is bowed in a vain attempt to avoid a pounding by the egg-sized raindrops, a real Vancouver rain. The Estonian Consulate office has recommended this particular supplier of passport photos as one of only a few that prints passport photos to Estonia's specifications, used for citizenship applications, passports and encrypted Estonia Identity Cards, which are used for everything from riding the bus in Tallinn to online tax form completion, signatures and voting. My mother has just received her citizenship having gathered the required documentation that she is a bona fide Estonian: proof of her mother's place of birth (Haapsalu, 1889, as per her Estonian passport issued in 1927 and good only for six months), her own birth certificate (Stettler 1929), marriage certificate (1952) and change of name (nee Oro to Ustina through marriage). All this to prove that she is the child of Estonians, or more precisely an Estonian mother. With this proof of being 'Estonian', it paves the way for her granddaughter and great granddaughter to also accept the mantle of Estonian-ship. I, too, wish to have Estonian citizenship and it is for this reason that I have travelled by bus and ferry and bus again from Victoria to meet with the consul on a most inhospitable day. In my heart of hearts, like any good Canadian, in some ineffable way, I believe in my heart of hearts I know I already belong. My Estonian citizen-ship, having the piece of paper which



*Stephanie and mother Astrid Ustina,
LEP, Seattle 2013*



*Estonian performers.
LEP, Whistler, 2015*

says I 'am one', membership in a rare culture shown myself to be a good Estonian, attending Jaanipäev in Stettler and the Centennial of Estonians in Alberta

My mother and I go to Seattle for West Coast Estonian Days (2013) and in 2015, to celebrate all things Estonian, in Whistler, where we sing and watch cultural displays of dance and music and enjoy Estonian food at formal dances and are a couple among many on top of the mountain when Estonian TV shoots the most Estonians highest up and my Mother is interviewed, speaking Estonian!.

My mother speaks Estonian and takes a Caribbean Cruise with East Coast Estonian groups. In short, we easily and proudly take part in all we can, for the dancing and singing are not simply activities we do, but like all the arts, they tie us together with the other participants.

I take pride in knowing my grandfather was a boy who knew only Estonian when he came to Canada in 1901 with his mother and father from Tver, Russia, where they

had fled from the pristine, clear light of Saaremaa, and that they found their way to Stettler to farm, working in nature with plants and animals under the wide prairie skies to grow their lives. Too, I am astounded at my grandmother's gumption, simply stepping away from her teacher's life in Haapsalu, a seaside resort (reportedly visited by Tchaikovsky while he was composing Swan Lake) for a rural family and eventually marry, all the while bringing her cultured ways with her. She made hats and dresses and aprons, and during the Great Depression re-used fabrics to make her children's clothes. She knit in the Haapsalu style, lacey blankets and shawls using finely spun wool.

The same nimble agility that my grandparents demonstrated so long ago when they left behind lives that didn't work for them to seek futures in the great unknown, is demonstrated by Estonia today. This small country changes with the times. A recent MarketWatch article named Estonia "The Most Technologically Advanced Country in the World", largely for its government's priority of supporting tech start-ups (the most per capita in the world). Indeed, in 2007 Estonia was the first country in the world to institute e-voting, and during the last Estonian election, fully 24% of ballots were submitted

online, using with the encrypted Estonia Identity Card. Throughout the EU this same card is recognized as an official travel document in practically less time than it takes to tie one's shoes, it can be used to access hundreds if not thousands of online business and personal forms and documents, including health records. Annual tax submission can be completed using it and money for bus travel in Tallinn and Tartu can be loaded onto it using bank transfer.

There's little doubt that Estonians have had to learn to roll with the punches in order to survive. Occupied through the years by Denmark, Sweden, Russia and Germany, it's likely that the spare diplomacy, ironically coexisting with a famous stubbornness for which the Estonians actually have a name, has been a way to cope. But now self-governed, the choices made by the government of this small country point to its independence of mind: Estonia has little to no public debt, a high standard of living, education programming which sees children as young as seven taught computer coding, a high rate of graduation from secondary schools and a mother's wage paid to women up to 15 months after giving birth.

In a recent poll approximately three quarters of the 1,400,000 population of Estonia, claimed to not believe in a god, with the Lutheran church taking second place at about 16%. Today, evidence of this peaceful co-existence of religion and a nature-worship or paganism can be seen in an old church on Saaremaa, where pagan symbols dance in a circle on the ceiling of a long abandoned old church.

But this is 2016 and much has changed in the world in five years. Now when my mother applies to renew her citizenship it is the police, the *Polizei*, not the Citizenship and Migration Bureaus that replies, telling her she is not actually Estonian, and same with her grand and great granddaughters. It is explained, in formal bureaucratic language, that in the past a mistake was made, that when my grandfather became Canadian he renounced his Estonian citizenship, that when my grandmother didn't inform Estonia that she wished to remain Estonian after moving here, the absence of her communication indicated she didn't wish to continue as an Estonian, that when she married a Canadian she could no longer be Estonian. All this, though the 1922 Estonian Citizenship Law clearly states that citizenship cannot be relinquished if it is attained through birth. It is the police, now, who manage citizenship. And when I hear that a member of the Estonian parliament suggest that the way to manage the radicalization of 900 plus refugees who have found their way to that small northern country is, to perhaps, take away their Korans, this from a country which has clawed its way to freedom, I am dismayed.

So, technically, my mother is no longer Estonian. I suppose that should I try to renew my citizenship I, too, would be denied. That her parents are buried in the Estonian cemetery, having made the long journey to Stettler while carrying the soil of Estonia with them in their hands, the sky and sea in their eyes and freedom in their hearts, it seems, by the authorities to count for not much. I suppose, officially, now, in their hillside graves next to the smallest and earliest wooden church, (1906) where the travelling minister used to preach to the Stettler



Astrid Ustina, 2015

farm families, they would now be seen as interlopers? I won't be applying to renew my citizenship. The powers that be have made their position clear. But in my heart of hearts, I know I am Estonian and always will be. No matter where I live, or what language I speak, I know who my mother is, and her mother and father before her. I know they fearlessly carried their values with them, their creativity and entrepreneurial spirits, and how they lived, down to the summertime picnics to which one wore one's finery, and the things they believed in were Estonian ways. And nobody can take these away from me, this Estonian part of this mixed Canadian. Ernest Hemingway, in his novel *To Have and Have Not*, wrote, "In every port in the world at least two Estonians are to be found." Meaning what? That Estonians are itinerant travelers?

Come, let us stop all this analyzing, this interpretation and dividing into pieces. Let us sing a song.....

Shoot and ski: popular European sport hosted in Alberta

Helgi Leesment, Calgary, Alberta



Photo: Peter Leesment

L-R: Helgi Leesment, Rene Zahkna, Kadri Lehtla, Pärja Tiislar, Johanna Talihärm, Jan Treier, Kalev Ermits.

During the first weekend in February, the seventh International Biathlon Union competition took place in the Rocky Mountains at Canmore's Nordic Centre. In this sport, very popular in Europe with many hundreds attending each mountainous competition, the athletes by turns cross-country ski and shoot at targets. The unique challenge is to calm oneself for the shooting portion after extreme effort at skiing uphill and down with tricky trail turns. The races are exciting to watch as results are unpredictable because of the double elements; generally any given athlete tends to be a little better at one or the other.

Among the approximately 180 athletes in this World Cup series event, were five Estonians: Kadri Lehtla, Johanna Talihärm, Kalev Ermits, Jan Treier and Rene Zahkna. Among the chief organizers of this prestigious international competition were local Estonians Kirsten Kaarsoo and her sister Karin Kaarsoo along with their husbands. Karin's son

Andrew Chisholm was waxing specialist for the Canadian team. Former biathlon competitors, Andrew and his sister Liisa sometimes trained in Estonia. They met many athletes there and have retained many of those friendships. In Canmore AEHS members Enn and Pärja Tiislar hosted an afternoon reception for the visiting athletes and Andrew. Unfortunately the volunteer Kaarsoo couples were unable to attend because of onsite duties. The athletes had a grand opportunity to chat with a few local Estonians as well as renew their friendship with Andrew.

During the conversation, it was revealed that these biathletes have been involved in biathlon 7 to 10 years. Of the young men, two are in the armed forces. Johanna Talihärm is studying for an MBA degree at Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana. She has written an interesting blog, in Estonian, of her first impressions of life in North America. Interestingly, many of her comments echo first impressions of

Estonian immigrants to this continent in the 1950's. Asking what the visitors would take home from Canada, they reply pickup trucks, mountains, maple syrup. What they find especially notable is that people are friendly. The athletes claim it is not easy for Estonians to be equally gracious in return so soon without more time to establish friendships. This was another trait noted by immigrants of the late 1940's and 1950's.



Photo: Jim Sides

Johanna Talihaärm at the starting gate



Photo: Karin Kaarsoo

Sisters Kirsten and Karin Kaarsoo in front of Biathlon Canada bus

In Canmore the Estonians' best results: Kalev Ermits in the 10km sprint (86th with two penalty loops) and Johanna Talihaärm in the 7.5km race (45th; being a mere 8.6 seconds slower than the winner. In the mixed relay (2 men and 2 women), the Estonians finished 18th among 22 teams.

The next week they flew to the town of Presque Isle, in the state of Maine, by the US Canada border. There Kalev Ermits achieved 19th place among 88 competitors in the 10km event. In the next race he came 11th out of 53 biathlon athletes. Afterwards, their travels led to Oslo, Norway for the World Championships and onward to Hanto-Mansiisk, beyond the Ural Mountains of Russia, to the last event of this season's top Biathlon World Cup Series.



Photo: Jim Sides

Kadri Lehtla powering out of the starting gate

Of the dozen or so international biathlon competition locations, the stunningly situated Canmore Nordic Centre is among the higher elevation sites. This creates challenges for teams which do not arrive early enough to allow for their bodies to adapt to the somewhat rarer oxygen found there. Likewise, Europeans find it stressful to adapt to the eight hour time zone difference with Central Europe where the majority of competitions are held. Despite all that, Canmore's Nordic Centre is one of the favourite biathlon competition venues, considering its beauty, its accessible location and its excellent organization of ski-related competitions. The Estonians were very satisfied with Canmore's ski trails, accommodations and dining arrangements, and even with the weather.

Nancy Bush receives award from Estonian government

Helgi Leesment, Calgary, Alberta



Photo: Nancy Marchant
Nancy Bush receives 'letter of thanks' (tänu kiri) from Estonian government

various prestigious handicraft and knitting magazines. Nancy Bush is the author of several books featuring Estonian knitting techniques, all published by Interweave Press in Loveland, Colorado:

"Knitted Lace of Estonia: techniques, patterns and traditions", 2008.

"Folk knitting in Estonia: a garland of symbolism, tradition and technique", 1999.

"Folk socks: the history and techniques of handknitted footwear" originally published in 1994, updated edition published in 2012.

AjaKaja featured two articles previously about her:

- Summer 2007 #26 pp 24-25 "A Utah American adopts Estonian culture as her life's work"
- Winter 2008 #29 p. 32 "Knitter extraordinaire in Estonian styles, Nancy Bush visits Alberta"

Since those articles were published, Nancy has played a major role in the creation of the *Pitsikeskus* = *Lace Knitting Centre* in the town of Haapsalu, on

the west coast of Estonia where the well-known Haapsalu shawls originated. Naturally this museum, combined with an instruction centre, focuses mainly on Haapsalu shawls. Tourists come on their own, or more frequently by the busload from Tallinn, to see the displays, participate in workshops and watch Estonia's top experts knit. All are encouraged to scrutinize or ask for guidance from the best knitters of the Haapsalu shawls and other items that apply the same knitting style. One can see, buy or place orders for Haapsalu shawl technique wedding and casual dresses, cellphone carriers, umbrellas, men's ties, curtains, bed covers, lamp shades, sweaters, gloves, hats, vests, jewelry, framed art and more.



Photo: Nancy Marchant
Kristi Roosmaa Tootell presents Nancy Bush with a large bouquet of roses.

This past winter the Estonian government recognized Nancy Bush's long term leadership in promoting Estonian culture worldwide by according her a formal, framed letter of thanks from the Foreign Ministry. It was awarded to her in person by consul Rita Melder at a gracious ceremony at the New York Estonian consular office on January 19, 2016. Cultural affairs coordinator Kristi Roosmaa Tootell presented Nancy with a bouquet of roses along with gifts. The approximately 20 local Estonians present enjoyed coffee, kringel and other treats while chatting with the very talented honoured guest, Nancy Bush.

Eesti Vanasõnad/Estonian Proverbs

‘A proverb is to speech what salt is to food’

Nancy Bush, Utah, USA

I first became aware of Estonian proverbs or *vanasõnad* on a trip to Tallinn in about 2000. I chose to have dinner in a new restaurant, *Kuldse Notsu Kõrts* (Golden Piglet) at Dunkri Street 8. This eatery offers traditional Estonian food, so it seemed the perfect place for a person with an interest in Estonian traditions. I liked the decor; wall hangings by the talented Estonian weaver Cristi Kütt, wooden chairs and tables and rustic accessories. The walls were white and, scattered throughout, in Estonian and English, were *vanasõnad*. I was charmed by this and asked my Estonian friends to translate the ones I couldn't understand. My favorite, as it happens, was in English and I have remembered it and taken it to heart as a good lesson, ever since:

Don't spit into the old well until the new well is finished. (*Ära vanasse kaevu sülitä, enne kui uus on valmis*).

Vanasõnad are wise sayings, some centuries old. If a saying has been used long enough to be termed 'old' then the wisdom it carries certainly has value. Many come from 19th century farming life, are based in truth, practical experience and common sense. Some bring good luck, they are used to make life better, and can be humorous. Hard work, education and dedication are held in high regard by many Estonians, these values are reflected in their *vanasõnad*.

I have encountered Estonian *vanasõnad* often during my years of research into Estonian traditional knitting, traditions and customs. While on a trip to a West Coast Estonian Festival in Oregon, while talking

about our work, an Estonian-American friend said to me, "you know, we Estonians say 'the work will teach the worker' (*Töö õpetab tegijat*)" and this has proven true for me so often, when, by trial and error, I have learned to solve some seemingly insolvable knitting mystery about an Estonian knitting technique or pattern.

Most Februaries, I attend a wonderful fiber conference in Tacoma, Washington called The Madrona Winter Retreat. Every year, the organizers have a Charity Night, where participants are entertained by teachers who volunteer to present a talent show which encourages donations to several charities: Doctors Without Borders, Heifer International and the Global Fund for Women. This night is always wonderful and always very successful.

My talents are few when it comes to singing, dancing, or other entertaining skills. I had always avoided being part of the talent, happy to be part of the audience. Last year, while doing my bit in the audience, I started to ask myself what I could possibly do to add to the talent show, to show my support for the fundraising that went on on this entertaining night. I reviewed, in my mind, what I was skilled at and realized I did have some 'talents' but they were not the conventional kind. I am really good at research and I also have been complimented on the photographs I take. How, on earth, could I use those skills in this context? And, of course, relate it to my love for Estonia.

Vanasõnad was the answer. I started to research *vanasõnad*, looking online; there is an amazing amount of information about

them there, as well as asking my Estonian friends, both in North America and in *Eesti* for help. I ended up with a large collection of these wise words. Lists were compiled for me by Aire Salmre in Connecticut and Helgi Leesment in Calgary. Helgi gave me helpful background information and Aire told me some *vanasõnad* that she remembered from her childhood.

I asked a good friend in Estonia about her experience with *vanasõnad* and she shared ones that are used over and over again in her family. And, when I asked another friend and a researcher at the *Eesti Vabaõhumuuseum* (*Estonian Outdoor Museum*) which *vanasõnad* were part of her life, this is what she related:

We went to Tartu this weekend as little Mihkel had his 1st birthday. It was funny indeed to play with Marten (4 years old). We played hide-and-seek. When we had to decide who counts, he said: „You count. You are fat and are not fit to hide. “Oh dear, how we all laughed. And here comes the first proverb:

Lapse suu ei valeta
Children don't lie.

And, so, for my ‘talent’, I had to choose from all the *vanasõnad* I had collected and share only a few with the crowd. I chose to not say the Estonian, for fear there might be an Estonian in the audience and I would be forever embarrassed. I had a small slideshow in the background, images from Estonia that illustrate what a beautiful country it is, just for atmosphere. I tried to pick *vanasõnad* that would offer some words of wisdom to my audience: knitters, spinners, weavers and textile artists. Here is my list:

Ütle, kes on su sõber, siis ütlen, kes sa ise oled.

A man is known by his friends.

Õpi, õpi hoolega, siis saad kooki moosiga.
Study, study diligently and you'll get cake with jam.

Tark õpib teiste vigadest.
Smart ones learn from mistakes of others.

Töö õpetab tegijat.
The task will teach the worker.

Kus viga näed tule ja aita.
When you see a failing, come and help.

Magajale kassile ei jookse hiir suhu.
A mouse does not run into a sleeping cat's mouth.



Source: Internet/Facebook

Lindu tuntakse laulust, inimest tegudest.
A bird is known by its song, a person by his deeds.

Vanasõna ei valeta.
Proverbs don't lie

and finally:

Jõudu tööle! Jõudu tarvis!
Wishing you strength for the job!
Indeed strength is needed!

An Estonian man is knitting the world's largest flag for the country's centenary

Estonian World in Life April 29, 2016 ·



Estonian Valtrik Pihl, a Helsinki-based construction worker from Paide, is knitting a huge, 160-square metre (1,722-square foot) flag as a gift for Estonia's centenary, celebrated in 2018.

Pihl started to think three years ago, what a privilege it is to live at a time when Estonia is celebrating its most important birthday in history, its centenary in 2018. He wanted to give a unique gift to the country and thus started knitting a huge Estonian flag as a birthday present.

Knitting one row of the flag takes an hour

and a half. Pihl has set a norm for himself to knit three rows per day.

“Knitting the flag is a part of my every-day life, like brushing teeth,” he says. “By knitting this flag, I am breaking gender stereotypes and confirming the belief that Estonians are hard-working.” It takes 3,000 hours and 139 kilometres (86 miles) of yarn to knit a flag that big. This amount of yarn costs 4,000 Euros.

The 100th birthday will be celebrated over longer period, not in a single day. Major celebrations are expected to start in April 2017, to mark the centralizing of Estonian land into one province. The anniversary's culmination will be 24 February 2018, but the celebrations will continue up until 2 February 2020, the anniversary of the Tartu Peace Treaty. The dedicated web page EV100 was launched by the Estonian government in 2015.

Editor's note: Extracted from article posted on the Internet

Estonia celebrates 100th birthday!

Celebration of the 100th birthday of the Republic of Estonia will take place from April 2017 to February 2020. Numerous events and preparations are being planned and are posted on the Internet site **EV100.ee**. At the time of writing, some 70 events are scheduled by government agencies, universities, EV100, societies, choirs,



and others. About the same number of gifts have been identified, ranging from kiiks (swings) to musical instruments to parks to cultural events....

The story of the Estonian state's birth and its rights to self-determination evolved from 1917 to 1920. After the signing of the Tartu Peace Treaty in 1920, Estonia was recognized by the international community and became a full-fledged state.

Alberta Estonian Heritage Society

List of members, June 2016

| | | | |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------|-----|
| Boehrnsen | Sylvia | Calgary | AB |
| Brown | Betty | Nanaimo | BC |
| Collin | Marion | Airdrie | AB |
| Clark | John | Denver | Col |
| de Launay | David | Peterborough | ON |
| de Launay | Geoff | Kanata | ON |
| Derksen | Colin & Linda | Edmonton | AB |
| Dinning | Shirley | Edmonton | AB |
| Fodor | Evelin | Calgary | AB |
| Franchini | Karen | Burnaby | BC |
| Gue | Anita | Yellowknife | NWT |
| Gue | Brian | Edmonton | AB |
| Gue | Kevin | Hornby Isl. | BC |
| Gue | Lisa | Ottawa | ON |
| Gullikson | Barbara | Barons | AB |
| Gutsche | Horst | Barrhead | AB |
| Hall | Gwen | Ashmont | AB |
| Hennel | Gloria | Myrnham | AB |
| Hennel | Henry | Stettler | AB |
| Hennel | Leah | Calgary | AB |
| Hennel | Lorne & Anne Marie | Calgary | AB |
| Hennel | Rodney & Liz | Stettler | AB |
| Hennel | Ron W. F. | Stettler | AB |
| Herman | Liia | Inisfail | AB |
| Jaako | Harry | Vancouver | BC |
| Kaert | Mati & Linda | Edmonton | AB |
| Kalev | Tiiu | Eckville | AB |
| Kaljuste | Truuta Kai | Montreal | QC |
| Kalvee | Willy G. | Calgary | AB |
| Kenzle | Alice | Nanton | AB |
| Kenzle | Susan | Austin | TX |
| Kerbes | Deane & Irene | Stettler | AB |
| Kiil | Dave | Edmonton | AB |
| Kingsep | Bob & Annette | Victoria | BC |
| Kivisild | Livia | Calgary | AB |
| Kotkas | Perry | Calgary | AB |
| Kraav | Jüri & Helle | Calgary | AB |
| Krasman | Leslie | Champion | AB |



| | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------|----|
| Kroll | Randy | Edmonton | AB |
| Kuester | Matt | Edmonton | AB |
| Lecerf | Elizabeth | Edmonton | AB |
| Leesment | Peeter & Helgi | Calgary | AB |
| Liikane | Epp | Everett | WA |
| Maddison | Anneliese | Edmonton | AB |
| Madill | Anita | Calgary | AB |
| Matiisen | Arne | Calgary | AB |
| McElroy | Elve | Camrose | AB |
| McClung | Eda | Edmonton | AB |
| Munz Gue | Martha | Medicine Hat | AB |
| Päsuke | Mark | Vancouver | BC |
| Päsuke | Rein & Janice | Calgary | AB |
| Päsuke | Toomas | Canmore | AB |
| Pallo | Jack Henry | Red Deer | AB |
| Peet | Ethel | Edmonton | AB |
| Peetri | Ave & Kevin | Calgary | AB |
| Pilt | Shirley | Edmonton | AB |
| Pohjakas | Kaljo & Lilian | Lethbridge | AB |
| Robertson | David & Christine | Leduc | AB |
| Ruus | Allan | Calgary | AB |
| Ruus | Lea | Calgary | AB |
| Ruusauk | Siim | Sherwood Park | AB |
| Sastok | Helve | Edmonton | AB |
| Schleindl | Val | Edmonton | AB |
| Schuler | Kelly | Calgary | AB |
| Shongrunden | Astrid | Penticton | BC |
| Sorenson | Marlene | Calgary | AB |
| Tardie | Elizabeth | Edmonton | AB |
| Tiisler | Enn & Pärja | Canmore | AB |
| Tipman | Liisa | Calgary | AB |
| Tipman | Bob & Kathy | Calgary | AB |
| Ustina | Astrid | Edmonton | AB |
| Ustina | Stephanie | Victoria | BC |
| Visser | Igor & Mari | Cochrane | AB |
| Walters | Sylvia | Rimbey | AB |
| Wartnow | Floyd C | Delta | BC |
| Zach | Inge | Calgary | AB |
| Zielinski | Michel & Kristine | Spruce Grove | AB |



