



Keepers of the Past

A NEWSLETTER FOR COMMUNITY HISTORIANS

VOL.1, ISSUE 2, AUTUMN 2000

And What Happens After: The Oral Counterhistory

Imagine a few months after your history book is finished (whew! you're sleeping at night!). A few people are gathered around a friendly kitchen table, exchanging news and telling stories — a typical community pastime. An argument over certain names, dates, and facts begins to brew. Out comes the precious history book, that ever-present fountain of knowledge, to settle the dispute. But, in the course of turning to the pertinent history, the pages accidentally fall open on a picture, totally unrelated to the conversation. Suddenly, the disagreement is forgotten, and a new story begins to take shape.

This imaginary story shows four important points about history books. First, there is (or will be, when yours is finished!) one in almost every home. Second, they are kept within easy reach, and are used often. Third, the books become valuable resource tools for community information and historical knowledge. And fourth, they ignite an oral tradition that reaches far beyond the limitations of the written word.

This kind of oral retelling of the familiar stories (and those less well known) will have a significant impact on your community. The books you produce will serve as a catalyst for an oral resurgence of all the stories of your area. People will tell their version of stories, both those included in the book and those that may be missing.

This oral regeneration is a vital, but often overlooked component of the history process.

That is why, if someone from outside your community were to read your book, their experience will be limited to only what is written. It will not invoke personal memories, nostalgia, community spirit and pride, those feelings which give a community history book its popularity and power. A stranger is not capable of "filling in the blanks," so to speak.

What, exactly, are these oral stories about? After all, if you've done your part, you should have all the stories of significance, and all your dates and facts are accurate, right? Well, maybe not. Human memory is fallible, and even when checked and rechecked, errors can creep in. Also, it would be impossible — and not always politically correct — to record every story, every memory, of your whole community. Your book would be too big, for one thing.

For another, do you really want to air all the skeletons in everyone's closet? Including your own? Likely not!

So keep this in mind when you are flooded in stories and unsure what to keep and what to leave out. Relax! The oral counterhistory will be there to tell "the rest of the story."

In this Issue

- The Oral Counterhistory
- Editor's Corner Closet
- Fundraising 101
- Langley & Sumas History Book Launches
- Archives on the Web
- Government Grants

Feature Article:

- The Books are Coming!!!
How to Launch Your Book!



Pioneers of the Sumas area sharing stories.

Editor's Corner Closet

Hello! Welcome to our second issue! We have a mixed bag of articles for you to enjoy, whether you are at the kickoff of your project, sacked at the fifty yard line, or ending the fourth quarter! (That's all the sports terminology for now — I promise!) We have looked into such issues as archives in cyberspace, finding a cash cow to fund your project, and planning your big book launching day! We have also examined the idea of an oral storytelling surge that will accompany your book's launch, and continue for many years. Enjoy!

In this new millennium, customer service is the key ingredient in any company's success. We at Friesens are proud to note that our ongoing commitment to our customers has led to a solid reputation in the printing field. Ongoing positive feedback from satisfied history book groups lets us know that we are definitely on the right track.

Our provincial history book representatives and our customer service coordinator, Lynda Hiebert, have been the recipients of many wonderful cards and letters, full of thanks and praise for their efforts. John Dyck, of the Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, wrote, "[we] were thrilled as we inspected our Anniversary Books...The book

was as much as we had hoped for and more...Friesens has done an excellent job...Our thanks to you... for giving us excellent service." The group from Houston, BC, sent a warm note of thanks regarding their book. They noted, "We have had nothing but positive feedback...From all indications, the book is already selling well...Thank you for your input and advice."

Henry Wiebe of Abbotsford, BC, was impressed by Friesens' technical expertise. He wrote, "You have handled the job very professionally and we are very pleased with the product. It is no trouble selling a fine product. People are amazed at how good the pictures turned out. You must have good equipment. We have no hesitation recommending Friesens as a quality printer to anyone."

The committee from Loon Straits, Manitoba, was also happy with their book's presentation. As they noted, "Everyone is so very pleased with the cover and the beautiful way the book was done — Have received so many compliments thanks to you all."

As part of providing innovative and ongoing customer service, Friesens launched this newsletter as a resource for local and community historians. Already, it has received quite positive feedback. Ron Blair received



Merle & Bronwyn Massie; June 2000

many compliments when he attended the National Librarian's Association meetings in Banff, Alberta. Doug Roxell, the records management coordinator of Oxford County, Ontario, sent congratulations via email, saying, "I look forward to future issues."

We look forward to bringing those issues to you! If you have an idea for an article, or wish to share your experiences, please contact me at:

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In the Next Issue

- Profiles of Our People: Ed Kliever, Saskatchewan Sales Rep
- Putting it All Together: The Assembly Process
- Balancing Act: The art of choosing a committee
- Paying the Tax Man: Charging the GST, PST
- Perspectives: Including all generations in the story

Money, Money, Money: Raising Cash For Your Project

To paraphrase our Prime Minister, you've got the people, you've got the plan, and you're ready to roll, right? Well, unlike our PM, what you don't have is an unlimited budget at your fingertips! That's right — one of your first responsibilities in putting together a history book isn't the collection of history, it's the collection of money! History book production can be a cost-intensive undertaking, and your group will spend the next two years or so working hard to raise the cash to see your project through. But don't worry — there are lots of fantastic fundraising ideas out there, and with a little perseverance, your group will easily raise the necessary monies.

Most history book committees start out

with four fundraising staples: pre-selling the books; soliciting local businesses for cash donations; taking interest-free loans from committee and community members; and applying for government grants. Your Friesens representative will have some good suggestions about your preselling tactics, including helping you set prices. Local businesses are always an excellent bet, whether you want to solicit advertising in your book, or are looking for one-time (or ongoing!) donations. Don't forget that some businesses will donate supplies or services, such as stationery, photocopying, or items for auction in lieu of cash donations.

Community members who may not have enough time to work on your project with

you may still wish to contribute. These are excellent people to approach for either cash donations or interest-free loans to your group. And then there's all that free government money — municipal, provincial, and federal bodies often have grant programs in place that your project may be able to access. I have included a short list of government grants on page seven in this newsletter. For some groups, these four avenues (pre-selling books, local business support, individual support, and government grants) can generate enough revenue to cover all project costs. However, most projects need to raise extra funds at some point in the process.

Depending on the amount of money your budget requires, and whether the funds are needed in the short-term or the long-term, fundraising offers flexible options and solutions. Traditional fundraising sources such as raffles, bake sales, garage sales, catering, potluck suppers, box socials and local dances have always been successful. Be sure to make use of local events such as ball tournaments, rodeos, or fall fairs, where you can capitalize quickly on profits with food booths, bingos, turkey shoots, or more outrageous ideas. This summer, with so many towns and villages planning Millennium celebrations and homecomings, your group will easily capitalize on the history-minded events.

For unique fundraising ideas, visit your local library. There should be a good selection of books with both event suggestions and tactics to make your fundraiser a success. One in particular, *1001 Fundraising Ideas and Strategies* by Jim Hawkins (Fitzhenry



Mayor, Marlene Grinnell receiving the first copy of the Langley City book from Friesen Representative Ron Blair

and Whiteside: Ontario, 1998), was written specifically for a Canadian audience. It's filled with pointers about insurance, promotion, and registration, as well as specific examples of successful fundraisers.

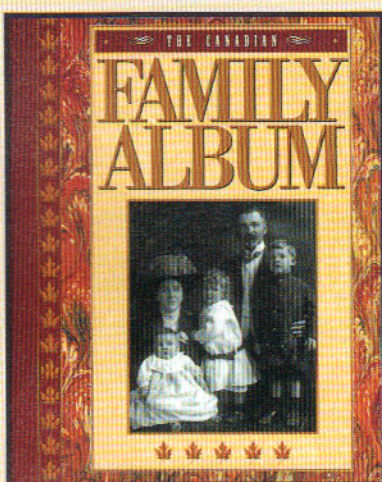
In the last few years, fundraising has become big business. You have probably been asked to buy everything from clothes to popcorn, cookies to coupons. There are professional companies available for hire that can suggest fundraising products to fit your budget, your interests, and your goals. If you (or your kids or grandkids!) have Internet access, you will find thousands of companies listed under "fundraising" who can help you get started. For those less connected, your local yellow pages will have some excellent contacts.

Friesens Corporation has developed fundraising projects that are heartily endorsed by past history book committees. Perhaps the easiest involves auctioning the first copy of your book. As a special "thank you," Friesens will take the first copy of your history book and stamp "1st copy" in either a gold or silver stamp. The book is then placed in a special presentation box lined with black velvet. These first copies are usually in hot demand, and Lynda Hiebert, Friesens' Customer Service coordinator, says it is not uncommon for these books to auction off for anywhere from \$200 to \$1500 dollars!

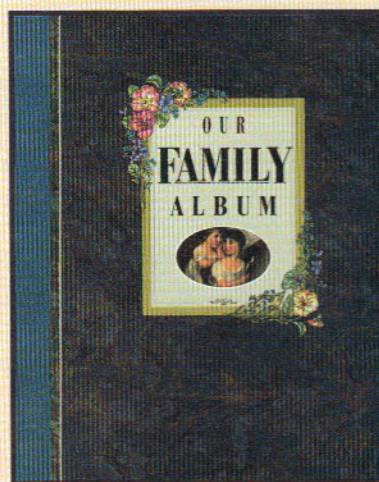
Another Friesens fundraising initiative for history books involves the sale of *The Canadian Family Album* and *Our Family Album*. These are beautiful hardcover books, filled with artwork and pictures, designed to help your community members record their family histories. Designed scrapbook style, they contain pages for precious family photographs and stories, genealogical tables and other family memorabilia. Past community groups have found them excellent fundraising vehicles, as well as useful for families struggling to organize their history into a coherent story.

For more information on these fundraising ideas, contact your local Friesens representative.

So, do you feel a little more confident? Sure you do! Your project is valuable, and you can't let a little worry like money stop you! As our PM said, you've got the people and you've got the plan. Now let's see you put it into action! And by the way, good luck!



Canadian Family Album



Our Family Album

The Books Are Coming!

You and your team have spent countless hours, slogging it in the trenches, so to speak. You have gathered and written stories, collected photos, typed, proofread, checked galleys, and organized the final assembly. All the frustration and triumph of the whole history book process is almost over. The last few milestones, including approving Friesen's blue-line proof, are in view. During these last few weeks and months, who has any extra time to think about the day the book arrives? Well, now is the time to think about it — you are about to reap your reward for all that hard work! Happy thought!

The day that the book arrives, or the day you plan to start selling the book, (otherwise known as the **BOOK LAUNCHING**) is of great importance. That day will set the tone for your entire book selling campaign. It should be planned well in advance.

Launchings are done in many different ways. I have attended dozens of them over the years, but they all have one thing in common — to get as many people gathered together at the same place and at the same time as possible. The old saying is true: "People attract People."

The date of the launching should be set well in advance. People like and need to plan their activities. Check calendars to ensure you do not conflict with other activities in your community. This is very important, because you want your book to have centre stage, and to attract potential buyers. The only exception to this rule is if your community is holding a reunion or homecoming celebration. Then, plan your book launch to coincide with that. People will already be thinking about your community's past — you can strike while the iron is hot! Some who attend will even purchase several copies.

Try to get good coverage in your local paper at least several weeks beforehand. Most papers will give you free space in the community interest section of the paper.



The book "Picture Hinton" was launched at the Alberta Library convention. Book editor: Mary Bargery (center)

Also, use your local radio stations for free coverage. Another excellent advertising idea is to place posters with the date, time, and venue of the celebration in local stores, banks, libraries, and any place where there is lots of foot traffic.

If you have pre-sold your books, ask people to pick them up on the launching day. **DO NOT** give them out ahead of time! You want everyone to be at the launching. Keep the books a surprise, under wraps until the day of the program.

Times for launching vary with every community. In most cases, evenings are best, but Saturday afternoons also work well. You need to decide what works best for your area. Another good idea is to

serve tea and coffee, and a light lunch or fancy finger food. People will be staying to chat with each other, comparing notes, and telling some of the stories that didn't make it into your book! Surround them with a welcoming atmosphere.

Some groups send out special invitations to personally invite people to the celebration. This is a good idea especially if you still have lots of early pioneers in your area. Also, use invitations to invite local, regional, and provincial dignitaries to your celebration. Invite as many as possible, and ask a few of them to say a few words at the launching. This promotes excellent public relations, and is a good drawing card if folks know who

"About two weeks before Christmas, ...the chairman took the neighbor's grain truck [and went to get the books from the printers]. They brought them home and he set them in his garage. He phoned me that night. He says, "The books are here, come and look. Take a look at them!" He was all excited. I have never known him to be excited. You know, he was just like a little kid in a candy store."

Delwyn Jansen, Leroy, Sask.

The Books Are Coming!

might be there. Most dignitaries love the chance to speak in public.

Be sure to have photographers from local newspapers and TV stations on hand. Appoint your own photographer to take photos of guests and pioneers. Remember, the pioneers will not be with us much longer, and these photos will be important to the future generations,

when they do the next book a few years down the road!

So remember — plan ahead, advertise, and enjoy your big day!

Ron Blair
Friesens History Book Representative
British Columbia

TIPS

Fundraising 101: Tips for Success

Finding money for a history book project can sometimes turn into a full-time job! Here are several tips to keep in mind when choosing a fundraising plan.

1. **Set a Goal:** How much money does your group need? You may only need a few hundred dollars for stationery costs, or several thousand for other expenses. Choose your project accordingly.
2. **Develop a Plan:** Co-ordinate with your members to determine what each person needs to do to help your project succeed.
3. **Make a Schedule:** This means determining a calendar, with a launch date and a conclusion. This helps to focus your energy, knowing when things need to be done.
4. **Choose a Group-Friendly Project:** Select a fundraiser that all your group members can and will participate in and support. Make sure everyone is committed to the project!
5. **Do One at a Time:** Choosing a few fundraisers and doing them well produces far better results than pursuing too many, which will spread your resources much too thin.
6. **Use Good Business Practices:** Making critical decisions, using good accounting practices, and promoting the fundraiser every day of your campaign are vital steps to making a profit with your project.
7. **Excitement and Enthusiasm:** Remember — your attitude is important! Be excited and enthusiastic about your fundraising project, and it will be a success!

“Gracious, it was overwhelming. I can remember we sent out the final letter. It said, the books are here, and this is the day we’re going to have the official presentation of the books....Come down to the hall....They came, and you don’t really know how people are going to accept this. We get down to the hall. There are people coming in, coming in, and they’re bringing in more chairs and more chairs and the senior’s group had said they would provide the coffee and squares. Well, I’m sure they figured they would have to cut those squares in half again to make sure there was enough to go around. The hall was packed. It was just ...it gives me goosebumps yet to think about it. We had no idea that that’s what people would think.”

Ann Riehl, Allan, Sask.

Quoted in *Scribes of Stories, Tellers of Tales: The Phenomenon of Community History in Saskatchewan*. (Merle Massie: University of Saskatchewan, 1997).



People were lined up and excited to purchase one of the limited edition numbered copies of “One Foot On The Border”.

Pioneers Stream Back to Langley

They came from as far away as Montana, from Oliver and Parksville and Blue River, and from communities all over the Lower Mainland. They had in common ties to Langley that stretch back more than a century.

The Clarke, Michaud, Wark, Dumais, Harrison, Wilson, Blacklock, Ferguson, Brown and Prytherch families were in Langley on Saturday, gathering first in Innes Square and then at Newlands Golf and County Club, for the launch of the official book on the city: *From Prairie to City: A History of the City of Langley*.

At Innes Square 66 members of these families gathered. They included the youngest, David Innes, who is four, and the oldest, Alex Ferguson and Greta Harrison Nettleton, who are in their 90's.

Photographers covering the event climbed up tall stepladders to photograph the gathering for posterity.

Addressing Langley City council on Monday, *From Prairie to City* author Warren Sommer praised the photographers for their courtesy, and remarked:

"We sometimes take the press for granted, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their tremendous, positive publicity they have provided throughout this project."

From Innes Square the party moved to Newlands, where the book was finally unveiled to a standing-room only audience.

"I think all of us involved in the project were suprised and moved both by the numbers of people who came out to the launch, and by the laudatory comments they made upon examining it," Sommer said.

"We heard nothing but good things about the launch and about the book."

From Prairie to City: A History of the City of Langley is available at Langley City Hall, the Centennial Library, Art and Frames, and Chapters.

It is also available in Fort Langley at the Centennial Museum, Birthplace of B.C. Gallery, and Wendel's Books.

It costs \$29.95.

Reprinted from *The Langley Times* (Natasha Jones).



A speech by author Warren Sommer. Langley City book.

From Lake to Prairie: Sumas History in a Book

"It was July 1929 when my family moved to their new home on the Sumas Lake bottom lands, where they had recently bought 40 acres of unimproved land. They pitched their nine by 12 canvas miner's tent at the north-east corner of Tolmie and Campbell Roads...they cut bullrushes from the roadside ditches to use as insulation under the floor. A small tin stove supplied heat for warmth and cooking. This was their first home that winter."

-Hugh Jones, family story from *One Foot on the Border*.

The smiling face of Sumas Prairie, with its prosperous farms, contented cattle and waves of summer corn was brought to fruition by the blood, sweat and tears of generations of pioneers who turned the Sumas Lake bottom into one of the most productive areas of British Columbia.

In its 400 pages, *One Foot on the Border: The History of Sumas Prairie and Area* does an intriguing and professional job of recording their stories-the Faddens, the Hougens, the Lees, the Tessaros and many more.

From the days of the Fraser River gold rush of the 1850s, when the Whatcom trail wound through the rain forest, to the floods of the late 19th century in the field of area history covers the subject in detail.

Even a keen student of history will discover new things: For example, the prairie is better known for corn or broccoli or turf

now, but once upon a time two brothers experimented with growing peanuts.

Sumas City (Washington) was the place to go for fun and excitement. Then there was the fellow who made wine from Sumas Prairie grapes: But if you've read this far, you'll want to read the book yourself.

One Foot on the Border is published by the Sumas Prairie and Area Historical Society, with editor and writer Daphne Sleight, known for her work on other local histories, such as that of Deroche.

It has a limited edition of 2,000 numbered copies, features 360 pictures and has a hard plastic laminated cover. The first five and last five books will be sold by closed bids.

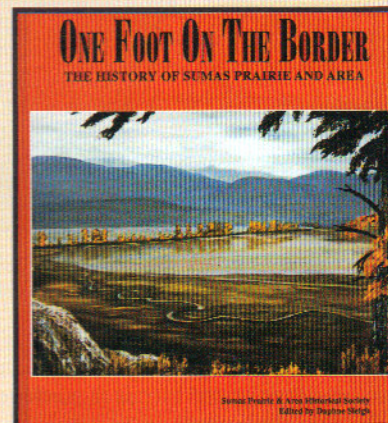
A book launch will be held on Saturday, Nov. 27 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Upper Sumas School at the corner of Vye and Whatcom Roads. Prior to the book launch, the cost is \$40 a copy.

For more information, you may contact Jim Lamson at 864-6144.

Reprinted from *Abbotsford News* (Russ Akins).



Mayor, George Ferguson came to pick up several copies of the book, and ended up staying for several hours autographing copies on page 229. This book completely sold out in two months.



One Foot On The Border

Research: Archives on the Information Highway

Wipe that dust off your hands. Put the cap back on your pen. Shut off that microfiche. Spend your photocopy quarters on ice cream. Cancel your room at the motel down the street from the archives. Doing research for your history book is now as close and easy as turning on a home computer.

In the last five years, Canadian federal, provincial, and municipal governments have sponsored the cataloguing of public archives onto computers. Pictures, census data, diaries, leaflets, and books, to name just a few examples, can now be accessed on archival internet web sites. Through the magic of your computer modem, you can find excellent information for your history book without leaving your living room. Whether you are searching for family history, local information, or national data, chances are you will find more than you need for your purposes.

In some cases, though, a trip to the archive is still necessary. But instead of arriving on the doorstep with only a vague idea of what you want and what the archivists can provide for you, do some preliminary work. Search their web site and plan your research trip. Make sure they have what you need — homestead documents, letters, pictures of your hometown, postal station charters and so on. Ask the archivists to have the documents ready when you arrive — this will save time for everyone. If the archivists know your research interests, they may turn up ideas and information you hadn't even thought of! You can use their website, and email back and forth with the archivists themselves, to save a lot of time and energy.

To find your local, regional, provincial and national archives, check out the website maintained by the University of Saskatchewan archives. Called "Canadian Archival Resources on the Internet," it is found at www.usask.ca/archives/menu.html. It contains a listing of most archival resources in Canada that can be accessed through the internet. Updated regularly, it is the most comprehensive resource available.

So...good luck, and happy clicking!

Government Grants: Contact Addresses

We have compiled a partial listing of federal and provincial grant agencies that can be contacted about history book funding. If we have missed any that you are aware of, please let us know. We would be happy to include that information in upcoming issues.

Federal

Millennium Bureau of Canada
255 Albert St.
10th Floor, PO Box 2000, Postal
Station 'D'
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 1E5
1-800-O-CANADA

Multiculturalism and Citizenship
Canada
15 Eddy Street
11th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0M5

British Columbia

Executive Officer
BC Heritage Trust
PO Box 9818
Stn. Prov. Gov't
Victoria, BC
V8W 9W3
(250) 356-1433

Alberta

Alberta Community Lottery Board
Grant Program
Alberta Gaming
50 Corriveau Avenue
St. Albert, Alberta
T8N 3T5
780-447-8980

Alberta Historical Resources
Foundation
Alberta Community Development
Old St. Stephen's College
8820 - 112 St.
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 2P8
780-431-2306

Manitoba

Manitoba Culture, Heritage, and
Tourism
Historic Resources
Main Floor - 213 Notre Dame Avenue
Winnipeg, MB
R3B 1N3
204-945-2118

Ontario

Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and
Recreation
Advisory Services and Grant Programs
6th Floor
400 University Avenue
Toronto, ON
M7A 2R9
1-800-267-7329

Newfoundland

Cultural Affairs Division
Arts and Culture Centre, Second Floor
PO Box 1854 Prince Phillip Drive
St. John's, Newfoundland
A1C 5P9
(709) 729-3650

Recipe Digest(ables)

PEANUT BUTTER BROWNIES

This is a great recipe to mix up for the family -- just before you take off for yet another history book meeting!

You will need:

2/3 cup	butter or margarine, softened
2/3 cup	peanut butter
2 cups	sugar
2 tsp.	vanilla extract
4	eggs
1 cup	flour
2/3 cup	cocoa
2 tsp.	baking powder

In a mixing bowl, cream butter, peanut butter, sugar, and vanilla. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine flour, cocoa and baking powder; add to creamed mixture just until blended. Pour into a greased 13 X 9 baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for about 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out with moist crumbs. Do not overbake. Cool and cut into bars.

Variations: Use chunky peanut butter. You may also omit the cocoa by increasing the flour. Sprinkle chocolate chips over brownies just before baking. *Yield:* about two dozen brownies.

Friesens... Community history's friendly giant.

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