



## **FALL NEWSLETTER**

*Published by the Friends of the Bar U Historic Ranch Association with headquarters at the Pierson House, Bar U Ranch NHS  
Box 82, Longview, AB. CANADA T0L 1H0 November, 2017 Issue 31*

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

*2017 was a memorable year at the Bar U Ranch, with free admission to the National Parks, along with a VERY warm, sunny summer, leading to record-breaking attendance at the ranch. Most of our special events were extremely (and perhaps unexpectedly!) well-attended, and I send my heartfelt thanks and admiration to the incredible staff at the Bar U, all of our volunteers and Board members, and also to the hard-working gals running the Bar U Cafe! All of you went above and beyond to ensure visitor satisfaction even when the visitors numbered close to a thousand on a single day! Well done, all! You should be very proud!*

*Time marches on, and change is inevitable. To begin with, four of our long-time Directors stepped down from the Friends' Board this past year, namely:*

- Rosemary Brocklebank, who became a Director in 2005, and served on the executive as 2nd VP for a number of those years. Rosemary also served on many committees, the most recent of which were the Volunteer Committee and the Stockmen's Dinner Committee.*
- Brian Garstin, who joined the Board as a Director in 2011, and served on the Cattle Committee as well as the Trail Ride Committee.*
- Lory Moore, who joined the Board as a Director in 2011, and served on the executive as 1st and 2nd Vice President. Lory was also on the Fundraising/Endowment Fund Committee, as well as the Stockmen's Dinner Committee.*
- Bette Muren, who was a long-time Board member, and chair of the Artifacts Committee for many years.*

*Thank you for all of the time and effort you dedicated to the various activities and responsibilities you took on over the years to ensure the ongoing success of the Friends' Board, as well as the Bar U Ranch itself. As luck would have it, there were some great people willing to step up and fill some of the vacant positions on our Board last spring. I would like to thank our two newest board members – Stephen Hughes and Hugh Kennedy – for everything they have contributed to the Friends of the Bar U this past year. I know how busy you are with your own ranches and families, and I am so grateful that you have chosen to give of your time, expertise and energy to help our Board continue to grow and succeed in its ventures!*

More changes were in the works however, and my husband and I have decided to take on a new adventure which involved packing up and moving to a ranch in SE Alberta. As I will be living too far away to attend meetings on a regular basis, I have passed my presidential duties on to Gordon Stephenson, as 1st Vice President, for the balance of the year, with many thanks! He will do a fantastic job, I am very certain. I will remain a member of the Board, however, for as long as they will have me! I love being part of the Bar U family, and will do my best to continue being involved as much as possible!

There were some sad changes as well, as we lost a few wonderful supporters of the Bar U over the past year, and I know we all will miss their presence – Keith Robinson, Francis Gardiner, Herman Wile, Wayne Lucas, Oliver Christensen, and Dallas Campbell. They all contributed so much over the years to making the Bar U a wonderful place, and we will always remember them fondly.

Once again, I would like to thank our Site Manager, Travis Weber, for his hard work on the Site throughout the year, as well as for his continuing efforts to ensure the success of the Bar U Ranch. Another new and exciting happening was the birth of Travis's baby girl, Chloe, this past spring, which I am sure changed his life in a big way! I have really enjoyed working with Travis on plans for the Bar U events, and I am certain that the coming season will bring more great and exciting things! Thanks as well to Mike McLean for his good humour and timely ideas to add to our special events! Much appreciated!! Finally, thank you to all of my fellow Board members for your support and friendship! It has truly been a pleasure!!



*Marian Anton, President*

### **SIGNAGE & ADVERTISING COMMITTEE REPORT**

*By: Charlotte Esser & Karen Ritchie*

This year we collaborated with Parks Staff in the design and funding of our Highway 22 signs which were completed with a fresh look just in time to welcome our summer visitors to the Bar U. We would like to thank the Sear's family for allowing our signs on their property, and to Don Stretch of Longview who did a tremendous job of completing the task.

In this day and age of technology, the Friends Website and Facebook continue to be great tools to keep the public engaged. We have over 2600 fans following our Facebook page from 43 different countries around the world! Visit the Friends of the Bar U Facebook page or our web page at <http://www.friendsofthebaru.com> to keep up to date with what is happening at the Bar U!

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

By: Doug Longson

Earnings from the Stockman's Dinner, Trail Ride, memberships, grants, and our calf crop was sufficient to meet our operating costs. Casino money was used to contribute to the Bar U Legacy Fund. The next Casino will be held on March 2nd and 3rd, 2018. A grant was received from Foothills Community Support Services and was used in support of our volunteer program. Special thanks to Kathy Nelson & Carole Hergert – Friends; Rose Dayment – Payroll; Liz Hergert and Steven Muth – accounting (Muth & Company). Thank you Parks Canada for allowing us to use the Pierson House as our office – and all the staff for mowing, shoveling, and other maintenance.



## **BAR U LEGACY FUND**

By: Doug Longson

The Bar U Legacy Fund is an endowment fund managed for us by The Calgary Foundation. The income from this fund (\$4,675 this year) is used to support the Heritage Ranch Rodeo – our main event – which showcases historical ranching practices. An endowment fund (current balance \$165,000) is a registered fund that never spends the capital contribution but generates income through investments. Annually, a percentage of the income (4% currently) is distributed to the Friends, and the balance is re-invested in the fund. This way the fund continues to grow, and the gift keeps on giving in greater amounts every year. The fund is managed by The Calgary Foundation (ten year compound return 7.2%), a non-profit foundation which currently manages over 100 funds for charitable organizations. This ensures that only the income will be available to the Friends; there will never be access to the capital in the fund. Contributing to the Friends of the Bar U Historic Ranch Legacy Fund now, means you will be a supporter of the Historic Bar U Ranch forever.

For Further information please contact Doug Longson at 395-3336 or write to us at P.O. Box 82 Longview AB TOL 1H0.



## **VOLUNTEER REPORT**

By: Shelagh Weston

This year brought about a change in the way we were able to communicate with our volunteers. The Park's Canada Bar U Administration implemented new software allowing us to better ensure that all of our contact information for our volunteers was up to date. It also allowed us to send out mass emails advising volunteers of upcoming events and volunteering opportunities. As a result, we are now able to communicate with our volunteers much more efficiently and effectively. It also allows our volunteers to advise us of when and where they would like to volunteer. We have received terrific feedback on this initiative, which we hope to refine and possibly expand in 2018.



On behalf of the Friends of the Bar U and Parks Canada, I would like to thank all of our wonderful volunteers. Whether you volunteer 100 hours of your time, or 2 hours, it all adds up. And no matter how you volunteer, whether that be accounting, in the gift shop, helping out with the maintenance, wrangling cattle, helping in the cook house, organizing side saddle displays, or one of the many other functions that are performed, everything you do helps to make the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site the amazing place that it is. Hats off to all of you and thank you again!

## **ANNUAL TRAIL RIDE REPORT**

By: Karen Ritchie



*Photo by Avril Chattaway*

The 17th annual trail ride took place on the Pekisko Creek Ranch west of the Bar U, and was led by Brad Coffin and Wayne Schlosser. The weather cooperated and cooled off just enough to be



*Photo by Avril Chattaway*

able to enjoy the ride without scorching temperatures. We did, however, have to contend with many wasp nests, but fortunately there were no major incidents! Sixty-five people participated, including 14 riding in the wagon, which was capably driven by Ross Fritz. During our lunch break, Bern Dayment provided an informative history talk of the area. A great lunch was supplied by Country Fresh Kitchens. Wranglers for the day included, Clay and Avril Chattaway, Hugh Kennedy, Gordon Stephenson, Karen and Wayne Ritchie, and our vet was Dr. Jordan Holt. The ride brought in a profit of \$3,055. Thank you to all those that made the ride happen.

## **CATTLE COMMITTEE REPORT**

By: Gordon Stephenson

On behalf of the Cattle Committee, I am pleased to outline the major activities and projects for 2017. The first step was updating the Cattle Policy as a governance document for the committee and the board, which outlines future objectives for the management of the herd. The primary focus is to adhere to the "National Farm Care Council Code of Practice" for the Care and handling of beef cattle.

I also wish to report we now have a Veterinary/Patient/Client relationship with Dr. Jordan Holt of the Eastern Slopes Veterinary Services in Black Diamond. This was essential in following the Code of Practice, as Dr. Holt will provide an annual herd health program and perform all required veterinary services. Currently the herd consists of 27 mostly Red Angus cows and a registered Hereford bull. The committee plans to purchase 6 bred Red Angus females prior to year-end to get the herd numbers back up to 33 head for the calving season.

Another initiative was the development of a Draft Grazing and Water Plan for the site by Travis. The plan will be implemented in 2018 and 2019, with the main purpose to showcase the herd for visitors, especially school tours, by bringing them to more accessible areas of the site during the grazing period. The Board, along with Parks Canada staff plan to put more focus on the educational opportunities the herd offers to visitors of the Park.

A major project was the purchase of a new 2W cattle handling system. Stephen Hughes was instrumental in sourcing a suitable system, which will provide more safety for people and cattle, along with the added benefit of less stress on the animals for vaccinations, treatments, preg. Testing and the tagging of calves and steers for the ranch rodeo. The alley is designed to handle both mature cows and calves which will be a vast improvement on the current wooden alleys, which need to be maintained for historical purposes. In closing, I wish to thank Marian Anton for her support of the Committee which was greatly appreciated. I also want to thank Stephen Hughes and Hugh Kennedy for their help and input as volunteers along with Patrick Davis for his dedication to the welfare of the herd and to Travis Weber for supporting the new policy and initiatives of the Cattle Committee.

## **2017 RANCH RODEO REPORT**

By: Charlotte Esser

Our Ranch Rodeo weekend started off with a very successful outdoor concert organized by Parks on Saturday night. The audience enjoyed the talented lineup of musicians who come from very diverse backgrounds, and gave us three different styles of entertainment. A thank you and congratulations to Parks for a wonderful evening leading into the Bar U Rodeo! Our Ranch Rodeo was another great success thanks to all our valued volunteers, board members, and parks staff. Everyone showed tremendous dedication and knowhow that made this day run so smoothly, and for that we are very grateful.



We started the day with our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Pekisko Creek Trade Fair, which ran from 10am-5pm. We hosted 10 vendors plus the Stockman's Memorial Foundation from Cochrane who were on hand selling tickets on 20 head of heifers! Visitors enjoy the added feature, and are able to purchase handcrafted items they would not find anywhere else. We brought back the very popular 50/50 draw, and our volunteers sold an amazing \$1200 in tickets. When the lucky winner came to receive his check for \$600, he very generously donated back 50% of his winnings to the Friends!

Rodeo contestants and spectators welcomed a new event this year, the "California Branding". This was greeted with praise by the 12 teams competing. The Bar U calves were "very healthy" for this event and provided a challenge for some, but with every heave the contestants made, the enthusiastic crowd was right there with them! This year at the Bar U, we were proud to have our first All-girl Team entered, and they were crowd favourites! Our teams appreciated the new changes that were made to depict some of the reality of their day to day lives, and they took the opportunity to showcase their talents to a record audience of 1,470 guests from all over the world! A special presentation was made this year to Mr. Rob Bergevin as a thank you for his generous donation of 8 years of announcing at our rodeo. He brings his talents and professionalism to the microphone which keeps the audience engaged, and we really do appreciate his support. This was the third year that we held the Ranch Horse Competition as part of the Ranch Rodeo, and for the second year in a row, Jared Sherman won the event. Jessica Manning once again volunteered her time as our announcer, and Peter Swales judged the event. We are always very grateful to our sponsors every year. These individuals and businesses generously donate and/or sponsor the awards for our contestants, and are greatly appreciated by the winners all year round. The award winners and sponsors/donors for 2017 were:



- TOP COWGIRL AWARD - presented to Natalie Benjimin of the Y U Cattle team, a framed photograph donated by Kim Taylor of Slidin' U Photography
- TOP HAND AWARD - presented to Dustin Sippola of the Jenkins Lazy U team, a silver bit made by Ralph Nelson, and sponsored by Longview Leather
- TOP USING HORSE AWARD- presented to Riley Regier and his horse "Sand" of the Blubird Valley team, handcrafted saddle bags donated by Jim Townshend.
- RANCH HORSE COMPETITION AWARD - presented to Jared Sherman of Soderghlen Ranch team, a silver buckle made by Peter Swales, and sponsored by Alberta Carriage Supply.

## RODEO WINNERS:

- 4th place team - Soderghen Ranches, who received wild rags and scarf slides, donated by Jennifer White and Clay Chattaway.
- 3rd place team - San Emideo Ranch, who received 60' range ropes, donated by Tongue Creek Ranch.
- 2nd place team - Rafter X Ranch, who received hand crafted spurs straps made by Derrick Pitts, sponsored by Somerset Tree Service
- 1st place team - Grizzly Springs Ranch, who received handmade buckles from Ralph Nelson, as well as sponsorship to the Ranch Rodeo Finals in Edmonton, all sponsored by the Friends of the Bar U

Our officials and judges this year were Peter Swales, Steve Mason, Roland Sippola, Lane Cooke, Tom and Rosemarie Bews, Don Kiemele, and Clay Chattaway. Our savvy score keeper was Lee Mclean, with Jessica Manning, and Karen Ritchie doing excellent work timing the events. Avril Chattaway kept our contestants on the move with no delays as our arena director! A special thank you to Ed O'Reilly for supplying cattle this year, for both the Ranch Horse Competition and Rodeo. This day would also not have been possible without our very important Special Events Committee - Marian Anton, Marj Bird and Gordon Stephenson, as well as the Cattle Committee - Gordon Stephenson, Stephen Hughes, and Hugh Kennedy, and the great crew in the back pens! This was another successful day at the "Mighty Bar U"!



### **AS ACCURATELY VOICED** **BY ONE OF THE** **PARTICIPANTS:**

**"THIS RODEO IS A REAL  
TREASURE."!**



## **2017 HERITAGE RANCH RODEO RESULTS**

The Heritage Ranch Rodeo in Edmonton was very well attended, as this is possibly the last year the rodeo will be held at Rexall Place, and the whole show was a bigger production than usual. The Grizzly Springs team from Waterton, who were representing the Bar U, did a great job and made it to the finals on Friday as one of the top ten teams. The winning team was the Mesabi Ranch team from Nanton, with second place going to the Meadow Springs team from Mountain View, and third place awarded to the Rocking Chair Ranch team from Pincher Creek.

## **BAR U RANCH - SITE MANAGER'S REPORT**

By: Travis Weber

This year we had the privilege of helping Canadians celebrate the 150th birthday of our great country and the 100th anniversary of National Historic Sites. At the Bar U Ranch this meant free entry, new activities, and a Canada 150 spin on everything we did.

### **BY THE NUMBERS:**

**Visitors:** 32,501 visitors came to the Ranch this year. An increase of 35% over 2016. 4,706 of those visitors were part of a bus tour.

**Programs:** 34 School programs; 13 Wagon tours; 73 Guided Walking Tours or Heritage Presentations; 5 Cowboy Cuisine Programs

**Volunteers:** 217 Volunteers; 3,364 volunteer hours recorded

Special Event	2014	2015	2016	2017	Growth from 2016
Hometown Heroes Weekend			588	1372	133%
Chuck Wagon Cook Off & Pack Horse Race (16-17)	226	297	416	741	78%
Canada Day	822	1001	1306	1146	-12%
Parks Day		242	253	426	68%
Ranch Rodeo	728	865	1053	1689	60%
Chore Horse	666	266	119	1441	1111%
Total	2442	2671	3735	6815	82%

The experiences we provide and the conservation work that is done on our iconic buildings and landscape is not a small undertaking. Over the year we have seen the Machine Shed and Slaughterhouse moved off old footings, then back onto new foundations. We have seen expansions of our special events, with the addition of a concert to the Rodeo, and a combination of our Chore Horse competition with Harvest.

The Harvest and Heavy Horse Weekend included a wonderful fundraising initiative that raised almost \$5,000 for communities affected by wildfires.

We introduced the Cowboy Cuisine program and new hands on activities like our Branding activity and Crafty Cow ears. We were happy to work with our new Café operator, Country Fresh Kitchens, who provided our visitors with great food at reasonable prices. These are some of the highlights of the 2017 season.



We continue to work on the construction plans for the Workhorse Barn. This iconic building has become a landmark not only for the Bar U Ranch but also for the region. Currently, we plan on beginning construction on this building in fall of 2018. A big thank you to the Friends of the Bar U Historic Ranch Association, the volunteers, staff, and special guests for your commitment and enthusiasm. Without your support we couldn't achieve the excellence that the Bar U is known for. You make the Bar U Ranch an amazing place to be.

## **ARTIFACTS COMMITTEE REPORT**

By: Avril Chattaway

Bette Muren, dedicated board member and committee head, stepped down from her position this summer and left a void. Avril Chattaway stepped in to fill her place for the remainder of the season, and Rose Dayment, Carole Hergert and Janet Gourlay Valance made up the rest of the team until, in August, we were fortunate to have Pam McLean join us bringing experience and interest to the Artifacts committee. Our job is to accept donations of suitable items pertinent to the site pre-1950's, then fill out a form (accession), photograph the item then, in a discreet place, write our identifying number on it, before either storing it in our c-can or finding a home for it in one of the buildings. Sometimes we have to make some difficult decisions and this year was no exception as we had to turn down a couple of unique items because we do not have a place to show them off or to safely store them. Our c-can that we purchased after the flood was one of our best ideas ever as everything is stored tidily in there, but our goal is ultimately to get our donated items out to be viewed. We had a very busy season with more cleaning and sorting of sheds of artifacts stored from the flood, cleaning of artifacts, and a bit of a redistribution of items. It was a huge job but with lots of helping hands we managed to get a lot done, and I really want to give a huge thank you to the rest of the team; Rose, Carole, Janet & Pam. It was a pleasure working with all of you! To Bette Muren, a big thank you for all your work and dedication in the past. And, a big thanks to the Parks staff of Travis, Sandra, Mike, and Patrick who are always only a phone call away, we really appreciate all you do for us from lifting heavy items to saying yes, we need that or no, we don't. Thank you very much!



## **STOCKMAN'S DINNER REPORT**

By: Karen Ritchie

The 19th annual Stockmen's Dinner is scheduled for Saturday, January 27, 2018 at the Highwood Memorial Centre. Mark your calendar! This year's honoured families are the descendants of Sandy and Annie Robertson, Harry Sr. & Bessie Feist, H.I. and Edna Thomson, and the Stoney Tribe from Eden Valley. Tickets will be available from the Friends of the Bar U Board Members, Co-op Store in High River, Sandul's Drugstore in Black Diamond, and Classic Rodeo in Nanton. Once again, we will be having a great silent auction.

If you have any items you would like to donate, please contact Marj Bird (403-312-9911).

## GIFT SHOP REPORT

By: Rose Dayment

This past season was a very busy year for the gift shop which was successfully managed by Kathie Selbee and assistants Erika Smith and Vicky McGonigle. It was a challenging year for choosing the items and stocking the gift shop. With the free visitation for all Parks Canada sites Kathie knew there would surely be an increase of visitors. She chose moderately priced items that would appeal to young people and their families. In so doing she still managed to exceed previous gross revenues. On the Harvest and Heavy Horse weekend the Gift Shop and Bar U site partnered in a joint fund raiser with the proceeds to go towards helping with the wildfires in B.C. The gift shop sold 101 editions of the Canadian Cowboy Cookbook, and the restaurant made Round-up Stew, which was a recipe contained in the cookbook. This endeavor was very successful. Kathie again attended the gift show in Edmonton as well as the Millarville Christmas market and found numerous items. She continues to expand the local and North American product selection. The local consignors that provide their creations for sale are a wonderful asset to the shop. One of the local consignors, Mr. Gerald Dilschneider, designed and created a special Bar U buckle, as a beautiful tribute to the Canada 150 celebration. The buckle was raffled off as a fundraiser for the Friends of the Bar U, with the winning ticket drawn on Canada Day! All Board members thank Kathie for her work and extra time that she puts in, and to Erika and Vickie for their assistance and support. They also thank Carole Hergert for her work in keeping the accounts of the gift shop in such good order.



### 2016 KIDS' CHRISTMAS PARTY GANG

John Esser, Steve & Shelagh Weston, Kim & Marian Anton,  
Clay Chattaway, Karen Ritchie, Riley Esser, Wayne Ritchie,  
Avril Chattaway, & Charlotte Esser

