



FRIENDS OF THE BAR U HISTORIC RANCH ASSOCIATION

FALL NEWSLETTER

*Published by the Friends of the Bar U Historic Ranch Association with headquarters at the Bar U Ranch NHS
Box 82, Longview, AB. CANADA T0L 1H0 November, 2019 Issue 33*



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By: Karen Ritchie

It's hard to believe another year has flown by and 2019 season is over. It was a great year as we celebrated the 100th anniversary of Edward Prince of Wales' arrival at the Bar U. This year we had one director leave the board, Hugh Kennedy, and welcomed two new directors, Theresa Chipchase and Ken Chatel. I truly appreciate all the time and effort that the directors put in to the Bar U. On a sad note we lost two great supporters of the Friends - Roy McLean and Rick Smith.



Over the course of the season we had many volunteers and directors come out to the Bar U to help with the special events. Our busiest day was Canada Day, with over a 1000 visitors followed by the Ranch Rodeo that always draws a big crowd. The animals on site continue to be a crowd pleaser. The chickens, turkeys, pigs, milk cow and bottle fed calf funded by the Friends, were a great source of entertainment, as was the buffalo, but the biggest hit was the Percheron mare and foal supplied by Lucasia Percherons that greeted the visitors.



Upcoming events will be our Kids' Christmas Party at Round-up Camp on December 1, followed by the Christmas in the Country Trade Fair on December 8 and then the Stockmen's Dinner set for January 25, 2020. Thank you to all the Directors, Bar U staff, Country Fresh Kitchens and the wonderful volunteers that support the Bar U. 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of the Bar U National Historic Site, so I hope you can come celebrate with us next season. Stay tuned for some special events.

SIGNAGE & ADVERTISING

By: Marian Anton

Our yearly ad in the magazine "Experience the Cowboy Trail" is very popular with tourists, and by all reports, we are getting excellent value for our advertising dollars in this publication. The Friends of the Bar U Website and Facebook page continue to be great tools to keep the public informed. We have over 30,000 fans following our Facebook page from more than 43 different countries around the world! With the help of the Parks Canada management team, we are striving to stay on top of the latest technological innovations relating to tourism and advertising, to ensure that the Bar U Ranch NHS remains one of the most popular tourist destinations in Western Canada.

Visit the "Friends of the Bar U" Facebook page, or our website at www.friendsofthebaru.ca 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, membership sales, grants, and our calf crop was more than sufficient to meet our operating costs. The Bar U Legacy Fund continued to grow. The income from this fund was used to support the Bar U Ranch Rodeo.

Casino money was used to repair historic equipment including the manure spreader, mower, antique trucks, and the crawler tractor. 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 Ranch House as our office. An unexpected benefit was Dylan exercising his culinary skills, and making dinner for us at several meetings. Many thanks!



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 is used to support the Ranch Rodeo – our main event – which showcases historical ranching practices. An endowment fund is a registered fund that never spends the capital contribution but generates income through investments. Annually, a percentage of the income 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. 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 T0L 1H0.

GIFT SHOP REPORT

By: Rose Dayment

Another season at the gift shop has again been very successfully managed by Kathie Selbee and Vicky McGonigle. At the beginning of the year the shop was completely emptied with the kind help of a few volunteers. Parks Canada had the walls painted and the carpet replaced. When the day came to move everything back Kathie had a plan as to how she wanted it arranged. The new arrangement has a more open appearance and proved to serve the public well. Kathie managed to stock a variety of items in various price ranges which helped to maintain sales. The tour buses arrived regularly which helped immensely. The many consigned items that people bring to the shop are appreciated. They add a very personal touch as well as add to the financial success of the gift shop. The Board members thank Kathie and Vicky for their enthusiasm and dedication in making the gift shop a pleasant place to visit. The Board also thanks Carole Hergert for helping to keep the accounts of the gift shop in good order.

VOLUNTEER REPORT

By: Cheryl Fredell

Our wonderful volunteers at the Bar U make it possible for all of the special events and ongoing activities at the ranch to be successful! Throughout the season, we call on them to help in various ways. May long weekend was a chance to see our teamster volunteers seeding with teams of heavy horses at the



Bar U Ranch. We also had a training day for people interested in helping with teams throughout the season, as for every event at the Ranch, our teams of Percheron are transporting visitors around the ranch and we have volunteer wranglers to help the drivers.

Our Canada Day celebration was a busy day, bringing in over 1,100 visitors. We had volunteers serving coffee at Round Up Camp and helping at the cookhouse

to explain the history of the house. We had a lot of people wanting to learn how make rope and how to rope the "steers" at the Saddle Horse Barn, so we had volunteers to help there as well.

The Ranch Rodeo at the Bar U ranch was well attended as always, and we couldn't make it happen without all of our dedicated volunteers. They spent the day in a variety of ways – selling 50/50 tickets at the rodeo, pouring coffee and visiting with folks at Round Up Camp and the Cookhouse, and helping in the Gift shop. We also had a lot of volunteers to help with the rodeo handling cattle, judging, announcing, timing/scorekeeping, and many others who helped to keep things rolling.





The Chore Horse competition was held on a great fall day with a good number of teams competing. The winner was Geoff Hoar, receiving a silver buckle donated by new Board Member, Theresa Chipchase. Our volunteers helped in the arena with judging and setting the course. We also had volunteers for Round Up Camp and the cookhouse. On behalf

of the Friends of the Bar U, we send our most heartfelt thanks to those who dedicate many hours of their time volunteering at the Bar U Ranch to help us keep make it a great place for all our visitors to experience every year. We truly could not do it without you!



ANNUAL TRAIL RIDE REPORT

By: Bill Kewley



The Annual Trail Ride of the FRIENDS OF THE BAR U took place on Saturday, August 3rd, 2019 at the historic OH Ranch west of Longview. There were fifty-seven participants this year. The weather was perfect – Mother Nature did her best by giving us enough cloud to keep from getting hot and enough

breeze to keep the bugs away! At the OH weaning pens, the participants enjoyed an excellent leisurely lunch provided by Country Fresh Kitchens. They were entertained by guides Ken and Deb Pigeon, who related the history of the OH Ranch, as well as its transition to becoming part of the Calgary Stampede, and future plans and programs planned at the ranch. At the end of the ride, everyone was invited to tour the old Cookhouse at the ranch, which is now an Interpretive Centre for the OH, and all came away with a new sense of early Alberta ranch history and its importance to our industry.

Thank you to the BAR U RANCH Historic Site for the use of their team and wagon, along with Ross Fritz as our teamster. Thank you to Kathie Selbee at the Bar U Gift Shop for handling all of the registrations, and to Ken Chatel for lunch pick-up and delivery, as well as for his help at the staging area. Thanks to Karen Ritchie, Marj Bird and helper for handling the waivers and registrations the morning of the ride, and a special thank you to Marj Bird for taking on the AEF project. With all of this excellent help, the event was a total success. One of the participants was very impressed with the registration and gathering process, stating that there was no congestion with the many trucks and horse trailers, and that the day was organized and flowed well.



CATTLE COMMITTEE REPORT

By: Stephen Hughes

As the head of the cattle committee I am pleased to report on the evolution of the Friends' cow herd through 2019, and into 2020.

2019 was another positive step forward for the Friends cow herd. Six cows were culled this fall, and five more bred heifers have been purchased from McPherson Ranch; another step in making the herd stronger, younger, and more consistent. This fall the herd is going into winter at 31 head. Our bull seems to be going strong, and should be fine for another year.



A highlight for me personally this year was the cowherd being enrolled in the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) Program. I want to thank Patrick Davis for his efforts in getting this accomplished, and helping to promote the sustainable practices of the Friends cow herd, and of our industry at large. The vaccination and herd health program continues to be implemented along with the help of Dr. Jordan Holt of Black Diamond. I am pleased with the management plan that is set up now for the herd; and again I would like to express appreciation for the efforts of Pat Davis in the day to day management of the herd.

I trust that I am continuing to fulfill the commitment I made to the Friends to organize the cow program on their behalf. Thank you to the board for their support throughout the last year.

RANCH RODEO REPORT

By: Marian Anton

Our 2019 Ranch Rodeo was another successful event, with many thanks given to Mother Nature for smiling on us at the last minute! I believe we counted over 1,100 people in attendance, which was very positive, considering all the events that were going on that weekend. Thank you so much to all of our amazing volunteers, including our Board members and their friends and family, who commit their time and energy into making this rodeo successful! Also thank you to the Bar U Staff who go above and beyond on a very busy day to meet our requests and ensure everyone has what they need.



We had 12 teams entered as usual, and a lot of interest in future rodeos, with four teams on the waiting list for next year! Our winners this year, for the third year in a row, were the talented guys



from Waterton, the Grizzly Springs Team! Second place went to Meadow Springs from Mountain View, third to the Rocking P from Nanton, and fourth to the Bar Box Cattle Company from Wetaskiwin. Our Top Hand this year was Jordie Waters, Jenkins Lazy U Team; our Top Cowgirl winner AND the Top Using Horse winner was Natalie Benjamin, of the Soderghlen Ranch team. The winner of the Ranch Horse Competition was Geoff Hoar of the San Emideo team.

We are so grateful to our sponsors and supporters of this rodeo, who provide prizes and sponsorship money, as well as cattle, time and promotion to help make it a great event every summer. We couldn't do it without you. Our sponsors and supporters this year were: Rob Bergivin (announcer extraordinaire), Carol Lyall and Jessica Manning (scorekeeper and timer), Peter Swales (judge, silver buckle supplier), Paul Phillips, Lee Bascom, Roly Sippola, Clay Chattaway, Joe Englehart, Charlotte Esser and John Loree, judges; Tom and Rosemarie Bews – cattle for sorting event; Primrose Cowboy Trappings and Highwood Valley Ranch, first place prize; Jim Townshend and Integrity Post Structures, second place prize; Kim Anton Leatherwork and Earl Ranches, third place prize; Tongue Creek Ranch, fourth place prize; Ralph Nelson and Longview Leather, Top Hand award; Slidin U Photography and Women of the Wild West, Top Cowgirl award; and Jim Townshend, Top Using Horse Award. We appreciate your support and generosity so much every year – thank you all!

The very colourful and entertaining “Women of the Wild West” were our special guests this year at the Ranch Rodeo, participating in the Grand Entry and carrying our flags. They spent the afternoon visiting with folks around the site, and came to the arena at the end of the rodeo to present the prizes. They added so much to the day, and by all accounts, they were a big hit and absolutely loved being here. They generously sponsored one of our rodeo prizes, and I hope they would be willing to come back again.



Our fifth annual Pekisko Creek Trade Fair went very well, and we thank our participating vendors for bringing such great variety and quality of products every year. We had 10 vendors this year, and all were happy with the new location closer to the arena. Thank you to Board members Marj Bird and Lynne

Steele for organizing and coordinating the set up of the Trade Fair. The 50/50 tickets were popular again this year, bringing in over \$1400.00, shared between the winner and the Friends of the Bar U.

We look forward to our next Ranch Rodeo, happening the third Sunday in August, 2020. It promises to be a great show! Hope to see you all there!



HERITAGE RANCH RODEO FINALS

By: Marian Anton

The Heritage Ranch Rodeo Finals was held in Edmonton from November 7 to the 10th. The Grizzly Springs Team from Waterton, as the winners of the Bar U Ranch Rodeo held in August, competed at the Ranch Rodeo Finals representing the Bar U Ranch for the third year in a row! Many thanks to team members Curtis Wynder, Greg Neilson, Josh Neilson and Kole Neilson. Although they didn't make it to the



final day this year, the guys represented the Ranch in fine style, and we are very proud of them. The winners of the rodeo finals this year were: First Place – R Bar Ranch, Second Place – Quill Ranch, Third Place – Meadow Springs Ranch.

Thank you to new Board Member Ken Chatel for attending and sending pictures of the event.

SITE MANAGER'S REPORT

By: Dylan Spencer

As someone new to the Bar U and Parks Canada I offer a big thank you to all the staff at the Bar U, the Friends of the Bar U and many others from Parks who have all contributed to a warm welcome to my first season. I would also like to extend a big thanks to Angela and her staff from "Country Fresh Kitchens" who put food in the belly and smiles on the faces of many folks this summer. Our visitor centre and experience would not be same without you. It would also not be the same without Kathy and Vicki keeping a constant dialogue with all our guests and sending them marching on with lots of good Bar U branded merchandise, plus enthusiasm for the Bar U, which they are skilled at cultivating.



Since coming aboard a year ago, Parks Canada has seen changes in its primary directorate with Ron Hallman replacing the acting CEO Michael Nadler and Michael Nadler moving into the vice-president of operations. Both men bring extensive experience in a variety of roles within government departments. Parks continues with the next steps in the management planning cycle and over the summer/fall we held initial consultations with close stakeholders such as Bar U staff, the Friends, and youth. A day long draft plan workshop was facilitated by Parks in October and the first draft is expected in the latter part of November. The plan will be reviewed by National Office and then we will bring it back to the community and stakeholders for a final round of consultations this spring/summer. The plan, which looks at a 10-year horizon is expected to be completed in the fall of 2020.

Statistically, our total visitation was down just slightly from our 2018 numbers and we also saw a slight drop in total revenue. That said, given our late opening due to a break in and the poor weather in May it is very likely we would have exceeded 2018 numbers if we hadn't experienced these less than ideal circumstances. We are optimistic about exceeding 2019 numbers in 2020. We had lots of ongoing positive comments on our regular programming, our interpreters and the site in general. Schools from across SW Alberta visited the Bar U in spring and fall and one of my season highlights was watching the kids and families exploring, learning from and engaging with the site at all levels.

A number of special events trotted through the Bar U this year. Despite the challenge of the weather, which delayed both spring seeding and harvest, the Rhythm of the land carried on and through the hard work and support of Alberta Carriage Supply, Eau Claire Distillery and their volunteers; seeding, binding & stooking and threshing were completed. Canada day, the Ranch rodeo, Chore horse and Historic Places day saw high visitation, volunteer turnout and enthusiasm from all involved. As someone new to the site it is inspiring to see the passion that our staff, the Friends, and volunteers from

throughout the community have for these events. Several pages could be written on that alone. Alberta Beef rounded up a combination of experienced chefs and up and coming young chefs for a beef chili cook off in June. Round up camp was buzzing for the day as young chefs competed for who could produce the best beef chili. On a different tone, the Bar U hosted its first ever Citizenship ceremony. The ceremony included about 40 new Canadians and their families and was attended by local MP John Barlow. Participants were from local communities such as High River, Okotoks, Nanton and Claresholm. Feedback from this event was positive and we look forward to hosting this again in the future.

The Bar U has historic ties to both the Stoney Nakoda and the Blackfoot, though in regards to the latter we know less about the specifics. Staff reconnected with members of the Bearspaw nation and elders from Bearspaw visited the Bar U. We also saw select elders from Kainai visit the Bar U. There is interest from both sides on collaborating on indigenous interpretation and events at the Bar U in the future. Waterton has also hired an indigenous liaison, Joseph Many Fingers from Kainai who will be working with all parties to help facilitate shared interests and projects.



Thanks to Sandra, Mike, the Chipchases and many others who facilitated, participated in, or represented the Bar U at outreach events this year. These included the Little Britches parade in High River, a chuck wagon and team presence at the Calgary Stampede/Draft horse town and a similar presence at Nanton days. A team and wagon went out to the Calgary Polo Club for the “Way out west fest” and provided fun rides for all that wished. The Bar U also sent a team up

to Rocky Mountain House NHS for one day of their western weekend. We are hoping to continue to support these and other events off site in the future.

Anyone who visited the Bar U this summer and had any interest in history would have enjoyed the display highlighting Edward, Prince of Wales who was the former owner of the E.P. ranch. We were fortunate enough to arrange a public visit to the ranch on the historic 100th anniversary of the Prince’s visit to the area and a number of people enjoyed a tour of the historic core buildings. Given the interest, we are considering working with the E.P. in the future to arrange other tours.

The variety of livestock at the Bar U continue to bring life to the site. We welcomed a new team, Dolly & Daisy, a pair of Percheron mares who have worked out very well. Finnegan, the Bison continues to be “the Brad Pitt” of the buffalo world, catching peoples’ interest with his cinematic resume and old school bison magnificence. Turkeys, chickens, and pigs in pens close to round up camp are a consistent draw for the public. Though it is not always feasible to have the cattle in the public eye or get the public

to points on site where they can view the cattle we are working on options to better connect the public to our herd in the future. Thanks to Stephen Hughes, Patrick, and the many Bar U staff and members of the Friends who continue to give time, energy and enthusiasm that support having livestock on site.

Patrick and crew were busy this summer keeping everything working well. Outside of that they also found time to restore the old Boar shed in the NE pasture and kudos to Nevada for working tirelessly to finish renovating the lunchroom in the former pig barn. Patrick has been getting further restoration training and we are hoping to give special focus to restoration work in our historic core over the next 3-5 years.

Over the last year, with the support of the Friends, a lot of work was done on Bar U equipment, trucks and other machinery. Shane Chipchase did fantastic work restoring our manure spreader, Cam Weddel worked on the Merc, the Dodge and the 3 ton and they are all running and can be seen moving around the site. Cam continues work on the TD14. Thanks to Mike Mclean, who was able to see the fruits of his idea unfold as a horse drawn bale un-roller was completed and delivered on site recently. We hope to try this out on site soon with one of our teams. Cumulatively all this work will contribute to further animating the site on an ongoing basis in the future.

The final phase of the Federal Infrastructure Investment program at the Bar U which was intended to begin in the summer of 2019 will get rolling in the winter of 2020 with restoration work on the Work horse barn. Despite the unruly weather, the old waste middens on the north side of the site were capped this fall and Secure Energy did a good job of working with us and the weather to ensure completion before winter.

In closing, I regret not being able to recognize each staff member, Friends member, volunteer or community member who has contributed to the richness of the total offer at the Bar U. If you don't already know, next year is our 25th anniversary, so I hope I can extend an invitation to spread the word as we dream, plan and mobilize collective efforts towards celebrating the Bar U's 25th next summer.

ARTIFACTS COMMITTEE REPORT

By: Pamela McLean

The Artifacts Committee grew by one member for the 2019 season, and what a valuable member he proved to be. Fellow Board Member, Ken Chatel, undertook many projects on his own for the committee, including designing an electronic Donations Form and establishing a list of criteria for Donations to the Friends of the Bar U Society. The list is still in draft form but I can share with you that we are looking at limiting donations to: items dated to pre-1950; linked to ranching in Southern Alberta, and therefore similar items likely used at the Bar U; items used during the correct time period and could be implemented either as a prop on site or replace a prop that has reached the end of its lifecycle. The complete list of criteria should be ready for viewing at the next AGM in 2020.

Big was the word for the 2019 season, as while our donations continued the trend of being down compared to previous years, what we did receive were enormous! In total, the Boyd Family estate donated 6 of their beloved buggies to the Friends, and they are being gently stored in some of the horse barns at the Bar U. We hope that the Bar U will be able to put some of the ones in better condition into action, and showcase the more fragile buggies in the near future.



My final point is to mention that we are looking into the purchase of a trailer where we can showcase some of the beautiful donations that The Friends of the Bar U Society has received over the years. Ideally, we would like to be able to haul this trailer to local events, rodeos, etc., over the Summer months, to generate continued interest in the Bar U Ranch.

None of this work could be done without the dedication of its committee members: Rose Dayment, Carole Hergert and Ken Chatel. And a big thank you, as well for the support of Parks Canada employees: Mike McLean, Dylan Spencer and Sandra Codd.

STOCKMAN'S DINNER REPORT

By: Karen Ritchie

The 21st annual Stockmen's Dinner Fundraiser is planned for Saturday, January 25, 2020 at the Highwood Memorial Center in High River. Our honored families this year are the descendants of the Broomfield Family from Stavely, the Garstin family from Longview, and the Bedingfeld family from the EP Ranch. As well, we have our silent auction, the wine raffle with the heads or tails game, and some special entertainment lined up. Tickets will be available from all our Directors and some local business the beginning of December.

If you have any items you would like to donate to the Silent Auction, please contact Marj Bird at (403-312-9911). Please watch our Friends of the Bar U Facebook page for more information, or send an email to info@friendsofthebaru.com

