

Club formed Jan. 18 1973 Boulder E

January 17 1980 my first report

Buffalo Lake naturalists annual meeting elects officers

The annual meeting of Buffalo Lake Naturalists was held in the Courthouse at Town and Country Museum on Thursday, January 17, with 25 members and two visitors present, when a new slate of officers for 1980 was elected:

President, Lloyd Lohr; Vice-President, Wilf Hewlett; Secretary, Bertha Clarke; Treasurer, Marvin Lohr; Editor, Virginia Maitland; Historian, Rosemary Dowie; Librarian, Jim Burrell; Reporter, Grace Neill. Board of Directors - Jim Burrell and Eric Smith, with Elsie Doak as alternate.

An Environmental Protection Committee was formed, members of which to be responsible for bringing to the Club's attention situations they deem to be detrimental to our environment.

These are the appointed members - Allen Clarke, George Cochrane, Elsie Doak, Marge Ganske, Trudy Grafe, Vera Hansen, Herb Hayes. Phoning Committee - Trudy Grafe, Bernice Greenlee, Edna Haywood, Gladys Hewlett. Program Committee - Jim and Alta Burrell, George and Ruth Cochrane, Lloyd and Bernice Greenlee, Virginia

Maitland, Grace Neill, Eric and Barb Smith, Brent Wylie.

Trail Committee - Rosemary Dowie, Lloyd Greenlee, Herb Hayes, Wilf and Gladys Hewlett, Martha and Ron Kruger, Marvin Lohr, Bruce Marshall, Bill and Mary Muhlbach, Don and Kent Strandquist, Brent Wylie. Lunch Committee will be decided by alphabetical order of names, as last year.

Federation of Alberta Naturalists winter meeting is being held at Camp Caroline, January 26-27. Members wishing to attend are to contact Lloyd Lohr.

A ski outing was planned for Sunday, January 20, in the Erskine Lake area.

Lloyd Lohr showed a very enjoyable collection of slides, taken on various field trips during the past year.

Lunch was served by Grace O'Shea and Marian Webb.

Next meeting will be held on February 21, same time, same place.

About 20 Buffalo Lake Naturalists enjoyed a winter hike on Sunday, on the west end of Erskine Lake. Travelling on skis, snowshoes,

or by dogsled they worked up an appetite for the lunch that

was waiting for them back at the Dowie sisters' home.

February 21 1980

Buffalo Lake Naturalists met

Twenty-seven B.L.N. members and two visitors met in the Courthouse, Town and Country Museum, at 8 p.m., February 21 when due to temporary absence of both President and Vice-President, the meeting was opened by Past-President Virginia Maitland.

Roll call was answered by members reporting recent bird and animal sightings.

Directors Jim Burrell and Eric Smith reported on the winter meeting of Federation of Alberta Naturalists at Camp Caroline. F.A.N., along with all naturalists and environmentalists are greatly concerned about the proposed development "Odyssey" in the Kootenay Plains area. A project of this magnitude, if it is allowed, would surely spell the end of another of our all two few genuine wilderness areas. Another subject discussed by F.A.N. was the sale of imported wild creatures, as pets, in this country — a practice which they feel should be stopped. Pollution is another problem which is steadily growing worse, and on this subject Bill Muhlbach spoke on a conference of Agricultural Service Boards which he had attended. There is a great need for proper disposal of herbicide and pesticide containers and the boards are attempting to find places, locally or regionally for safe disposal of such hazardous wastes.

The spring F.A.N. meeting will be in Grande Prairie, May 17, 18 and 19. A bus will be chartered from Edmonton for this trip, anyone wanting to go must contact Lloyd Lohr well in advance.

Jim Burrell reported that there is a sum of money included in the New Horizons grant allotted to the Museum, for the building of display cases for the Natural History rooms. Jim was given the go-ahead to investigate this further, and Art Weis offered his services as carpenter.

President Lloyd Lohr returned from the Recreation Board meeting with news that he had learned another grant may be available, for the purchase of a projector.

Invitations were extended to the club, to attend the Red Deer River Naturalists

meeting February 28, to see slides of a canoe trip in the Northwest Territories, and from Stettler Rockateers to join them March 3, to see Mr. Komishke's slides of Europe.

The Club welcomes three new members — Arthur and Alma Weis and Martin Graham.

Jim Burrell showed a fine set of slides of the flora and fauna of Alberta, and Vera Hanson showed the pictures she took of the C.N.R. station move.

Newsletters and 1980 programs were distributed.

Lunch was served by Virginia Maitland and the Muhlbachs.

Next regular meeting will be held March 20. Guest speaker will be Fred Schultz from Bluffton, with slides from Africa.

A number of members have been enjoying weekly winter hikes, along a good three-mile ski trail at Krugers' and Lohrs'. On Sunday, 20 members and visitors gathered at "Deer Hills Ranch", home of the Brent Wylies, for an afternoon of fun in the sun and snow. The more hardy, or foolhardy, even tried skiing the hills!

Naturalists support Buffalo Lake petition

(By Grace Neill)

The regular meeting of Buffalo Lake Naturalists was held in the Courthouse, Town and Country Museum, at 8 p.m. March 20 with twenty-eight members and nine visitors present and roll call revealed the return of quite a number of spring birds.

A copy of the "Save Buffalo Lake" petition was passed around to be signed by members and visitors who had not already done so. There was discussion about the proposed development in the Ptolemy Basin (in the Crowsnest Pass area), and a letter had been written to be sent to the Environment Department showing the clubs objection to this. It was reported that the application for development had already been refused, so it was not necessary for the letter to be sent.

Lloyd Lohr reported for the Trail Committee that they are applying for a grant from the

Trail Development Financial Assistance Program. They have about nine miles of trails either developed or planned, in a two by four mile area, about ten miles south-west of Stettler. These trails are for skiing, horseback riding and/or hiking, with an overnight camping area.

Money is needed for clearing on the older parts of the trails on which brush is growing back, for gates or stiles where the trails cross farm fences, for signs and some development of the camping area. Note that these trails and camping area will not have vehicle access, except to the beginning of the trails, and will be controlled by the club.

Correspondence from Mr. Eric Tull concerned a proposed 10 day Wildlife tour of Alberta in mid-June. If anyone is interested, more information may be had by calling Lloyd Lohr.

Birdhouses were being built at the Hospital, as oc-

cupational therapy, but it was reported there is no longer anyone there to supervise.

Any members wishing to build birdhouses are encouraged to do so. The Bluebird Trail maintained by club members and others is slowly bringing those beautiful creatures back to the area.

Plans were made for Nature Study night, Thursday, March 27. After the meeting all present were treated to a delightful show of slides, with commentary, by Fred Schutz from Bluffton, who had taken an extensive African trip last year. His pictures of the scenery, the wildlife and the people of that continent were unrivalled by anything seen on T.V. A hearty vote of thanks was given Mr. Schutz for his kindness in bringing such a show.

Lunch was provided by Neills and Strandquists.

Nature Study night, March 27, began in Stettler Elementary School Library,

when Neil DeGraff showed about 25 members and visitors the Frank Walker bird collection. It was a real treat for all, to see such a lovely display.

Later, in the Courthouse another section of the "Flora and Fauna of Alberta" slide collection was viewed. This is a very good set of pictures, supplied by the Department of Extension. Contests by Virginia Maitland and Edith Clark tested everyone's knowledge of nature, with prizes of seeds and houseplants to the winners.

Virginia Maitland also had prepared papers on building Martin houses, which she gave to those who were interested.

Forms for recording the local flowering date observations were received from Dr. C. R. Bird. These are to be filled out by members and returned to Dr. Bird in the fall.

Several bird nests, some odd plant life and a sample of Beaver work were on display.

Next meeting will be held at 8 p.m. April 17 in the Senior Citizen's Clubroom. The Rockateers will be our guests to hear Phillip Currie, Curator of Paleontology at the Provincial Museum of Alberta, speak on the History of Vertebrate Paleontology in Alberta.

Delicious cake and coffee were served by Barbara Smith.

08 March 20 1980

April 17, 1980

Buffalo Lake Naturalists

(by Grace Neill)

Buffalo Lake Naturalists met in the Senior Citizens' Clubroom, April 17 at 8 p.m., with 26 members and 12 guests; the Stettler Rockateers attended the meeting.

Plans are being made for a canoe trip on Battle River, May 3, 4. For details call Ron Kruger at 742-4675.

The regular May meeting will be held in the Courthouse, May 15, preceded by the club's annual "Waterfowl Hike" west of the Museum to Shuckburghs' Slough.

A reminder of the F.A.N. spring meeting in Grande Prairie, May 17, 18, 19. A bus will be leaving Edmonton early May 17. For more information, contact Lloyd Lohr at 742-3846.

Members and guests were entertained by Mr. Phillip Currie, Curator of Paleontology at the Alberta

Provincial Museum, who had many slides of dinosaur remains found in the Red Deer River Valley.

Lunch was provided by Burrells, Greenlees, and Edith Clark.

May 15 1980 PPI

Buffalo Lake Naturalists

(By Grace Neill)

The regular May meeting and annual waterfowl hike was held May 15. Several members walked out on the grade across Shuckburghs' Slough. At least 18 species of birds were seen. Numbers were way down compared to sightings at this time in 1979, possibly as a result of the lower water supply. It is hoped that this cannot be blamed on the Mosquito Control Program. As the absence of those pesky creatures made the walk more pleasant.

The Club welcomes four more new members, Eva Kirtley and Violet Isaman of Stettler, Lola Stewart of Erskine, and Bill Sanderson, Edmonton. Bill is a retired Geologist who has had several years service in South America. He should have some interesting stories to tell.

Twenty members present for the meeting were informed that the club has been granted \$500 from the County's 75 Anniversary committee toward the purchase of a 16 mm. movie projector. Since the type of equipment wanted will cost considerably more than that, the club will have to raise the balance of the money.

An interesting observation by several members was of the Antelope which visited that area. We must admit this is getting more like Antelope country every dry day.

Virginia Maitland has compiled a history of B.L.N. to be printed in the next edition of "The Alberta Naturalist", and will have copies made if members want them.

More Club reports are to be ordered, as the original supply has run out and new members want them.

Lloyd Lohr reported on the canoe trip on Battle River May 3, 4. He was joined by Bill Sanderson, and a lady from Hobbema. Lloyd was

disappointed that no other members had come along, as he felt it was a really worthwhile trip. He described the river valley as a "Birder's Paradise".

Lloyd Greenlee brought an Oriole's nest that had blown out of one of his trees. It was made entirely of grass, not mostly horsehair, as they used to be, possibly the reason for its downfall.

Six members planned to attend the F.A.N. meeting in Grande Prairie May 17, 18, 19.

Species Count Days are May 24-25. Observers, meet Sunday evening at Maitlands' trailer for tallying.

Sunday, June 8, plans are for a trip to the Duhamel crossing of the Battle River Hwy. 21. Meet at the Town office at 10:30 a.m. Bring your lunch. First stop will be Duhamel Campsite.- The next meeting will be June 19, at the Herb Kruger farm, with a short hike in the area, and followed by "Krugers' Famous Hamburger Cookout". There will be a \$2 charge for the meal, with all proceeds going to the club. Prospective members and friends are invited to join us for this enjoyable yearly event.

The meeting closed with a lovely lunch, provided by Bertha Clark and the Cochranes.

June 19 1980

Buffalo Lake Naturalists miss flying squirrel

(By Grace Neill)

Thursday, June 19, over 30 Buffalo Lake Naturalist members and guests met at the Herb Kruger farm home and most of them took part in a two-and-a-half-mile hike through the fields and woods of the area, seeing a great variety of plants and birds. They were disappointed though to find the Flying Squirrel family, that had been occupying a birdhouse along the trail, had moved elsewhere.

After such a long walk, everyone did justice to the delicious hamburger barbecue supplied by the Krugers.

Trudy Grafe introduced her guests, Rev. Bruno Dorp and Mrs. Dorp from Germany. They are impressed with our countryside, and delighted by the friendly way they have been received. Three other visitors, Rolf, Agnes and Simone Lehmann became club members.

A request has come from the Grand Reunion Committee for the club to serve coffee and light snacks at the registration booth from 1-9 p.m. on Friday, August 8.

Lloyd Lohr reported the request for a Trail Development Grant has been refused, as all the funds had already been allocated. A Bell and Howell projector has been ordered, financed partly by the grant from the County's 75th Anniversary Committee. Because of the high cost, the club will forgo, for the time being, purchase of the large screen.

Wilf Hewlett reported on the trip by several members to the Federation of Alberta Naturalists spring meeting in

Grande Prairie. They were treated to a sightseeing trip of the Peace River area. Some expressed a wish to go back and spend more time there.

F.A.N. has planned a campout on the Kootenay Plains, with field trips of the area, July 5, 6 and 7. All members are welcome. Part of the private campground will be opened for their use.

As this was our last meeting for the summer, we are reminded of the activities planned ahead. July 26-27, a mountain trip to Yoho Park. August 17, bus trip to Devon Gardens and Muttart Planetarium. Labor Day Canoe trip on Red Deer River. Next Meeting will be Thursday, September 18.

About 30 members and friends enjoyed a picnic at Duhamel Campground on June 8. Then Guide Herb Ross led the way to the remains of what was, when built, the World's largest wooden railway trestle, built in 1909 by Grand Trunk Pacific. From there, up the hill to the St. Thomas Catholic Church, built in 1883 and now preserved as a museum by the Duhamel Historical Society.

The Neill farm had an unusual visitor in late May, a Mockingbird, which stayed 10 days, entertaining with its antics and imitations. It was a rare sight, so rare in fact that Grace Neill received a phone call from the provincial Species Count Co-ordinators in Calgary, requesting to be notified immediately if it returned so he could come and see it. So far it has not. Another uncommon bird for his area, the Rufus Hummingbird has been seen by the Lehmanns and Mrs. Hrychuk.

September 18 1980

Buffalo Lake Naturalists hear of Member's canoe trip

(By Grace Neill)

Buffalo Lake Naturalists met on Thursday, September 18, in the new meeting room in the Community Centre. 25 members and 16 visitors attended. With these numbers it is evident that the Club has outgrown the seating capacity of the Courthouse meeting room, so will be using the new space from now on.

Members answered roll call by reporting highlights of their summer, and introducing their guests, who were from Stettler, Erskine, Red Deer and Calgary.

The 16MM projector has arrived, and films will be ordered from the Department of Extension for showing at future meetings.

The grant of \$550 does not cover the full cost so the Club will make up the balance. Proceeds of the coffee table at the 75 Anniversary Grand Reunion and from the bus trip to Devon will go toward this fund, but more is needed.

Lloyd Lohr and Jim Burrell were to attend the Federation of Alberta Naturalists fall meeting in Calgary, September 20-22.

Thirty-eight Naturalists, Rockateers and guests took the bus trip to Devonian Gardens on August 24. A dreadfully wet day, but aside from getting soaked, those who ventured out of the bus to view the gardens found them very interesting, well worth returning to another time when the sun is shining.

Thanks go to our driver, Barb Shepherd for piloting us safely, even through a snowstorm.

The Labor Day weekend canoe trip on Red Deer River found better weather conditions, with participants seeing a good variety of wildlife.

A cow moose and her calf were visitors at the Marvin Lohr farm recently.

After the meeting Lloyd Lohr entertained by showing slides of his Peace River trip. Two weeks of canoeing on The Mighty Peace was an adventure of a lifetime, and we all greatly enjoyed the opportunity to share it through Lloyd's pictures and commentary.

Lunch was supplied by Trudy Grafe and Marge Ganske.

Next meeting will be held October 16.

October 16 1980
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Buffalo Lake naturalists resume fall meeting

(By Grace Neill)

At the October 16 regular meeting of Buffalo Lake Naturalists Club, 25 members and three visitors attended. Four new members have joined the Club: Mrs. Hogg, Bashaw; Gwen Lang, Stettler; and Hugh and Nora Charles, Warden.

There were many sightings of migrating geese and swans to report this time.

The possibility of a bus trip in early November, to the Provincial Museum and

Muttart Conservatory in Edmonton, was discussed.

Directors Jim Burrell and Wilf Hewlett gave highlights of the fall meeting of Federation of Alberta Naturalists, in Calgary. The best news coming out of that meeting is that "Odyssey", the proposed huge development near Kootenay Plains has been turned down, thus saving, for the time being at least, that wilderness area. The question was raised "Are we really naturalists, or do we

just go along for the good company, the entertainment, the field trips and the lunches?" (That too, of course, but I, at least, hope that we all have the welfare of our environment at heart.) There was also much discussion on the subject of chemical waste.

Gladys Hewlett gave an interesting report on the field trips taken by those not directly involved in the meeting. They visited Fish Creek Park Interpretive Centre, hiked in Glenmore Park and saw the homes of Pat Burns and Fred Mannix, which are being restored. There is also a blue heron nesting area, which is being disrupted by city development.

The Club was saddened by the death of Eric Smith on October 7. Eric was one of the earliest members, and had held the President's chair for two years, as well as being Club reporter and Director to F.A.N. for several years. An ardent naturalist and enthusiastic worker in all Club activities, he will be missed by all. A contribution was made to the Cancer Fund in his memory. Sympathy of all the members is extended to Barbara and the family.

An invitation was received from Red Deer River Naturalists to attend their meeting on October 23.

The new projector was put to work, showing a film entitled "The Changing Forest". Slides were also shown from the "Flora and Fauna" collection, on Insects, and Alpine Habitat.

Lunch was supplied by Edna Haywood and Vera Hansen.

The Neills attended the Red Deer River Club meeting, as guests of Walter and Nellie Savage. People from Union Carbide were to have been there to discuss their proposed development on land that has for many years been a bluebird sanctuary. However, due to a misunderstanding of dates, they didn't show. Several farmers from the area, members of "Protect

Agricultural Land" attended to give their views, and a lively discussion was held. "P.A.L." is rightly concerned about the destruction of valuable farmland, and the impact of heavy industry in their midst on their way of life, as well as the wildlife habitat. The Union Carbide people promise to be at the November 27 meeting, and the invitation is again extended to anyone wishing to attend.

A National Film Board picture "Bears and Man" was shown. It is a really good film, showing how people are intruding on the bears' territory, causing much trouble for both. We should try to obtain this film to show at one of our future meetings.

0801-15 returned
November 20 1980

Buffalo Lake Naturalists

(By Grace Neill)

On Sunday, November 16, 48 members and friends boarded the Activities Bus with Ivan Jones driving, bound for Edmonton. They visited first the Muttart Conservatory, a series of pyramidal structures, each with its own controlled climate, housing plants from all over the world. Well worth seeing, it could be viewed several times a year, as the plants are always changing.

Then an exciting trip through the city via the ever present detours, to Government House and the Provincial Museum. The group had to be split up, as there were too many to go at once through Government House, which was once the Lieutenant-Governor's residence, but has now been converted into conference rooms.

The Museum and Archives with so many displays, would require much more time to really see everything, but the tour was enjoyed by all. A personal opinion is that the highlight of the whole massive display is the wildlife depicted in natural surroundings. It should be appreciated that each single section requires hundreds of hours' work and great artistic skill to make it

so perfect. A "must-see" for anyone visiting the Museum.

The trip home was livened up by music played by Lloyd Lohr and Art Johnson, and a few trying to sing. A much better day than the one in August, when the trip was nearly ruined by pouring rain.

Thursday, November 20., the Buffalo Lake Naturalists gathered in the Community Centre meeting room, with 27 members and one visitor, Bob Marshall. The Club now has a total of 62 members.

Plans were made for a winter hike, near the junction of Red Willow Creek and Meeting Creek. Participants will meet at the Town Hall corner at 1:30 p.m., Sunday, December 7.

Christmas Bird Count day is December 21, taking in a circle of 15 miles diameter. Teams will each take a section of the area, and may drive, walk, ski, or whatever they wish, and record any

wild birds seen, then gather at the Geo. Cochrane residence, 5019 - 44 Street, for final tally and a potluck supper at 6 p.m.

Anyone having Bluebird Trail records should turn them in to Lloyd Lohr.

Jim Burrell presented some samples of song sheets which he thought would be useful to take along on bus trips, or to use at meetings. It was decided Jim should obtain 15 of them for the Club.

Red Deer River Naturalists again invite anyone interested to attend their meeting November 27, 8 p.m., in Lindsay Thurber School library.

Entertainment, supplied by Mr. Ron Mussieux, Curator of Geology at the Provincial Museum, was very interesting slides and commentary on the Geology of Alberta.

Lunch was provided by the Hewletts and Herb Hayes.

December 21 1980

Naturalists make bird counts

(By Grace Neill)

The annual Christmas bird count is undertaken each year, with participating clubs each covering circles of 15 miles diameter in an attempt to discover the number of species, and number of individuals of each species inhabiting that particular area.

Buffalo Lake Naturalists took two circles, the Stettler area and another to the west, which we will call the Red Deer River area.

The Stettler area count took place on December 21, with 31 members participating. This count included nine feeding stations. 19 species were observed, with 968 individual birds counted. The most interesting finds were one Kestrel, a Cooper's Hawk, three Snowy Owls and a flock of Lapland Longspurs. Compared to last year's count, there were more Blue Jays, but fewer Bohemian Waxwings, Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Grosbeaks. No Ruffed Grouse or Pheasants were seen that day.

The day's activities led to a bountiful potluck supper at the Cochrane home, followed by singing of Christmas Carols and other old favorites led by George Jameson and his helpers, Lloyd Lohr and Art Johnson. When the voices gave out, Vera Toffelmire rounded the evening out by showing slides of her European trip. Many thanks to George and Ruth for the use of their

home for the occasion. There was a capacity crowd of 44.

On December 28, the Red Deer River circle was covered by 19 Buffalo Lake Naturalist members and 14

members and leaders of the local 4-H Pheasant Club. Reports of 22 verified species and two unverified, added up to 629 birds. Highlights of the count were

one Hawk Owl, a Northern Shrike, three Purple Finches, three Pileated Woodpeckers, and three Crows. There was a good count of Ruffed Grouse, Pheasants and Great Horned Owls.

Gathering at the Marvin Lohr home for final tally, all were treated to buns and coffee, courtesy of Bea and Marvin.

The Annual Meeting of Buffalo Lake Naturalists Club will be held in the Community Centre Meeting Room, Thursday, January 15, at 8 p.m. Main order of business will be the election of officers for 1981.