



APRIL – JUNE 2022 • VOLUME 46, EDITION 2

SPARKS

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN DEVELOPMENT MUSEUM



Volunteering at the WDM North Battleford

CEO REPORT

Thank you WDM
Volunteers

SASKATCHEWAN PEOPLE

Sylvia Fedoruk

FEATURE ARTICLE

Railway porters in
Saskatchewan

UPCOMING EVENTS

All Locations

Through May 2	Colours of the Saskatchewan Flag Seek and Find
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WDM Moose Jaw

May 22 - June 30	Moose Jaw Pride Seek and Find
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WDM North Battleford

June 4 - August 27	Refuge Canada travelling exhibit
June 9 through August	Kanawayimik Child & Family Services Indigenous Teachings (select dates)
June 21	National Indigenous Peoples Day Pow-wow

WDM Saskatoon

Through May 15	Refuge Canada travelling exhibit
April 12 May 10 May 23 June 6 June 14	Pop in and Play with the WDM
June 14	Spark Your Pride

Events and dates listed here are subject to change.
For details visit wdm.ca.

HOURS OF OPERATION

WDM Moose Jaw
Daily 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

WDM North Battleford
Daily 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

WDM Saskatoon
Daily 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Boomtown Café
Daily 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

WDM Yorkton
April to May
Weekdays 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Weekends 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm
June to September
Daily 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

COVID-19

Proof of COVID-19 vaccination/
negative test is no longer required
to visit the WDM or to dine in the
Boomtown Café.

Masks are not required but are
recommended.

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY DRAW WINNERS

Thank you WDM members for your invaluable feedback on our 2022 Membership Survey.

Prize winner names were drawn at random at the WDM Corporate Office on March 1. Winners were contacted directly. Thank you to all who participated.

ON THE COVER

Volunteers from the Browning family – Samantha, Ruth and Debbie – demonstrate how to make homemade bread in a wood stove in the farm house at the Heritage Farm and Village at the WDM North Battleford.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



THANK YOU WDM VOLUNTEERS

I am very pleased that we are now able to welcome our volunteers back to the WDM. The past two years have been difficult, and we have missed our volunteers. Since the pandemic began, our volunteer coordinators have worked hard to stay connected with our volunteers. The many emails and phone calls kept us in touch, but it isn't the same as having volunteers back at the Museum. While it will take time before everyone is fully back, volunteer orientations have begun, and projects put on hold due to the pandemic are being re-established.

Volunteers are an important part of the WDM family. Their gift of time and talent has a tremendous impact on what we can accomplish. National Volunteer Week is April 24 - 30 this year. It is a time when the contributions of volunteers are recognized across Canada. While we take this opportunity to recognize and thank volunteers for all they have done, we are also grateful they have chosen to share their gifts with the WDM. The work they do for the WDM brings Saskatchewan's rich history to life for the many people who visit the WDM.

Volunteering is a tremendous gift to our communities in so many ways. Thank you never seems to be enough for all that volunteers do for the WDM.

"At the end of the day it's not about what you have or even what you've accomplished... it's about who you've lifted up, who you've made better. It's about what you've given back."

– Denzel Washington

Thank you volunteers for continuing to give back and to making the WDM a better place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Joan Kanigan, CEO

IN THE GALLERIES

REFUGE CANADA

Former Karen refugee Bwe Doh Soe took a moment on March 12, 2022 to tell us his thoughts on the exhibition and to share some of his incredible story of his journey to Canada.

Watch the full interview at
wdm.ca/refugecanada or scan:



WDM Saskatoon

Through May 15, 2022

WDM North Battleford

June 4 - August 27, 2022

The exhibition *Refuge Canada* was designed to help people understand Canada's place in the current refugee crisis. It does this in two ways: First, by helping people understand the experience of refugees and the challenges they face. Second, by investigating Canada's historical track record of responding to refugees, which is more mixed than people may realize.

Refuge Canada is free with your paid Museum admission.

CREATED BY



Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21
Musée canadien de l'immigration du Quai 21

Canada

SUPPORTED BY



**TD READY
COMMITMENT**

NOTE TO PARENTS: The exhibit is a challenging one, and does contain sensitive content in stories or images that may evoke emotions. It will also prompt questions and lead to important discussions and education. Information is presented in an interactive way that will engage young people, however this kind of emotional experience might not be for everyone, so the decision to bring children through the exhibit is up to the individual parents or guardians who know their children best.

#MEMORYMONDAYS

On the first Monday of each month, our Facebook page features historic Saskatchewan memories. Share our post or comment with your own memory.

Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/wdm.museum

This issue of #MemoryMondays is all about playing in the snow. Though this time of year often has us wishing the snow would be gone already, we make the best of the weather we have. These four photos show children (and some adults) playing in the snow.



THIS PHOTO FROM 1922 SHOWS THE SAME SNOW SLIDE AS THE RIGHT BUT FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

WDM GEORGE SHEPHERD LIBRARY BARTON COLLECTION 04035



THIS PHOTO FROM 1922 SHOWS A PARENT AND TWO CHILDREN PLAYING ON A SNOW SLIDE WITH FARM BUILDINGS IN THE BACKGROUND

WDM GEORGE SHEPHERD LIBRARY BARTON COLLECTION 04026



TAKEN ON APRIL 11, 1948, THIS PHOTO FEATURES A CHILD AND A DOG PLAYING TOGETHER ON A SNOWBANK NEXT TO A SWING SET

WDM GEORGE SHEPHERD LIBRARY BARTON COLLECTION 08061



THIS PHOTO SHOWS TWO CHILDREN PLAYING IN HIGH SNOWBANKS NEXT TO A SWING SET ON APRIL 11, 1948

WDM GEORGE SHEPHERD LIBRARY BARTON COLLECTION 08057

SYLVIA FEDORUK

The Honourable Sylvia Fedoruk was a prominent Saskatchewan athlete and scientist. Born in Canora in 1927, she competed in track and field, curling and baseball. She won Saskatchewan a gold medal at the first ever Diamond 'D' Championships for curling.

She attended the University of Saskatchewan to study physics, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1949 and a master's degree in 1951. As a graduate student, she worked with Dr. Harold Johns on a team that was developing a new radiation treatment for cancer. This treatment used radioactive material called Cobalt-60 to target cancerous cells. Fedoruk was the only woman on the team developing this new treatment.

The machine was finished in 1951 and was used at Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon for over 20 years, treating 6,728 patients.

In 1972, it was replaced with a newer cobalt radiation machine.

The first patient the machine was used on was being treated for cervical cancer. After her treatment, she lived for 47 more years, to the age of 90. With the development of the Cobalt-60 unit, commonly called the "cancer bomb," survival rates for cervical cancer went from 25% to 75%.

The Honourable Sylvia Fedoruk, 1927-2012

- Born in Canora in 1927
- Accomplished athlete, competing in track and field, curling and baseball
- Won the Governor General's Gold Medal for academic achievement, 1949
- Was the only woman to work on the team that developed the Cobalt-60 radiation cancer treatment at the University of Saskatchewan
- Made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1987
- Served as Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan from 1988-1994
- Inducted into Canadian Medical Hall of Fame in 2009
- In 2012, the Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation was renamed the Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation in her honour.



SYLVIA FEDORUK PORTRAIT, C. 1990

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
A-9155. REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION

Fedoruk was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 1987. In 1986, she was appointed Chancellor of the University of Saskatchewan, the first woman to hold the position. From 1988-94 she served as Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, where she was also the first woman to take on that role.

Fedoruk passed away in 2012 at 85 years old. She was a trailblazer, helping advance the cause of women in science and leadership roles. In 2017, Sylvia Fedoruk School in Saskatoon opened its doors to students, honouring her lasting legacy in Saskatchewan.

The “cancer bomb” that she worked on is on display in the WDM Saskatoon.



PHOTO OF SYLVIA FEDORUK FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN HUSKIES BASKETBALL TEAM, C. 1948

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS A-6236



PORTRAIT OF SYLVIA FEDORUK AS CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN, 1991

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS A-9156



SYLVIA FEDORUK POSES WITH A CARDBOARD CUT-OUT OF HERSELF IN THE CANCER BOMB EXHIBIT NOW ON DISPLAY IN THE WDM SASKATOON

WDM-2007-S-691

ABOUT US



MORE THAN 800 PAIRS OF HELPING HANDS

The WDM is Saskatchewan inspired, and one of the most inspirational parts of the Museum is our volunteer team. Our volunteers do it all. They educate the next generation, make ice-cream by hand, send messages by Morse code, operate the province's only working steam locomotive, share their crafting skills, preserve artifacts and everything in between. We are so grateful for their dedication and passion.

Volunteers bring our galleries and programs to life. Over the past two years, the WDM has greatly missed the vitality and energy volunteers bring to the Museum. In 2022, we look forward to welcoming them home and getting back to keeping Saskatchewan history alive.

“

Even when in-person volunteering was paused during the pandemic, WDM volunteers kept in touch, checked in on happenings at the Museum and on how staff were doing. Some even bravely tackled the new challenges that came with virtual volunteering. And in almost every email and phone call, they told me how they couldn't wait to be back in the Museum. Thank you to all WDM volunteers for inspiring us with your passion and dedication to sharing Saskatchewan's histories with the world.

KRISTINE FLYNN, WDM PROGRAMS AND VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

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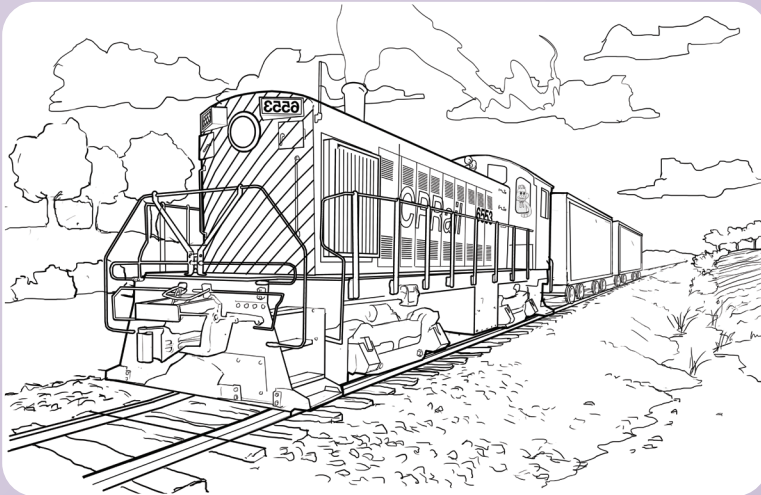
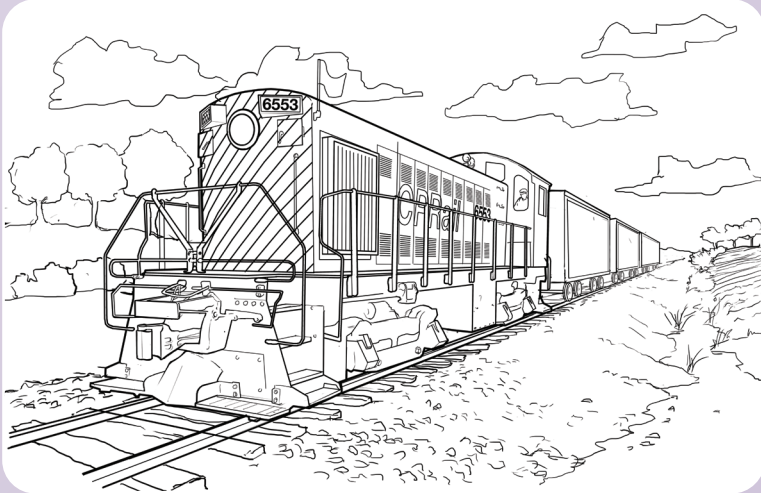


BRAINBUSTERS

SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

This Saskatchewan scene was illustrated by Regina artist Timothy Senko. The 1956 CPR diesel-electric locomotive 6553 pictured is one of the WDM's largest artifacts. It is on display at the WDM Moose Jaw.

Look closely to spot six differences between the two illustrations.



Want more activities like these?
wdm.ca/at-home-activities

Answers on page 19

LIAR'S CLUB

Cue game show music... the WDM's version of *Liar's Club* is back. *Liar's Club* was an American game show featuring a panel of celebrity guests who offered explanations of obscure or unusual objects. Contestants attempted to determine which explanation was correct.

How good are you at sifting truth from lies? Test your lie-detector skills below.



Which of the following artifact explanations is the truth?

- a. This is a bark peeler. It was used to peel the bark off of trees which were used to build log cabins.
- b. This is a watermelon knife. It was used to cut huge watermelons for Saskatchewan Roughrider games.
- c. This is a hoof pick. It was used to pick stones from animals' hooves.
- d. This is a sickle. It was used to cut grain during harvest.



Which of the following artifact explanations is the truth?

- a. This is a noodle stretcher. It was used to make homemade noodles in many settler kitchens.
- b. This is a set of curling tongs. They were heated on the stove or fire and used to curl hair.
- c. This is an early battery clamp. It connected some of the first electric items in Saskatchewan to their batteries for power.
- d. This is a fire starter. Used with a piece of flint, it is a common item for people who like camping in Saskatchewan's northern forests.

Search for the Saskatchewan Symbol

Hidden somewhere in this issue of *Sparks* is a Western Red Lily like this one. This lily is Saskatchewan's official flower.

Can you find it?



Railway Porters in Saskatchewan: FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY



A PORTER HELPS A WOMAN CARRY HER LUGGAGE AS SHE BOARDS A SLEEPING CAR, 1908

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF SASKATCHEWAN R-B3276, REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION

BACKGROUND

With the completion of the railway in Canada in 1885, rail travel became an essential means of connecting east to west. As settlers moved westward into the prairies from Ontario and Quebec, they relied on the railway to get them as close to their destinations as possible. Once these settlers had farm produce to transport, they relied on the railways to get their goods to eastern markets.

Though much has been written on how essential the railway was in paving the way for western settlement in Canada, there is much less understood about the people who worked on the trains. This is especially true when it comes to sleeping car porters, who, from the 1880s to the 1960s were almost exclusively Black men.

Porters worked in sleeper cars on railways and were responsible for every aspect of customer service in their train car aside from taking tickets, which fell to the conductor. Cleaning, making beds, stoking fires, shining shoes, giving local advice and information to passengers, waking passengers up when they reached their stops and many other aspects of customer service fell to the porters.

Despite providing such an important service on rail cars, Black workers were frequently overworked and underpaid compared to White railway workers in similar positions. These difficulties became even more entrenched in the system in 1908 when White railway workers formed a union and explicitly excluded Black railway workers from membership. Only in 1917 were Black porters able to unionize on their own when they created the Order of Sleeping Car Porters, the first Black railway union in North America.



1958 PHOTO OF A PORTER PERCY CORBIN SHAKING HANDS WITH STEWARD WILFRED NOTLEY

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/NATIONAL FILM BOARD FONDS/EO11177028, REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION

LABOUR ORGANIZATION

In 1917, Black railway porters in Canada created the first Black railway union in North America: The Order of Sleeping Car Porters (OSCP). Under the leadership of John A. Robinson, a porter from St. Kitts, this union fought against the segregation of railway workers and drew attention to the racist discrimination they faced. Having been barred from joining the pre-existing union for railway employees and forced to take lower wages and worse working conditions than their White counterparts, Black railway porters felt strongly that unionization was the only way to protect themselves from further exploitation.

By the end of 1919, all railway car porters in Canada were unionized under the OCSP. The OCSP sought to unify White and Black workers through recognizing the shared struggles of the working class, but the White workers were generally unwilling to work in solidarity.

Black railway workers and their union became advocates for the broader African-Canadian community. They advocated not just for better working conditions for railway workers but for all people of African descent in Canada.

THE SASKATCHEWAN CONNECTION

Sleeping car porters worked across Canada and lived in cities all along the railways, including in Saskatchewan. One of the most famous

WDM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Orlanda Drebit, Chair – Saskatoon
Robert Linn, Vice Chair – Saskatoon
Bernie Broughton, Secretary – Saskatoon
Gwen Beitel – Spring Valley
Kelsie Rock – Regina

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 13



1910 ROUGHRIDERS TEAM PHOTO WITH ROBERT "STONEWALL" JACKSON IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BACK ROW

SASKATCHEWAN SPORTS HALL OF FAME SRR.FB.P.T.1930.1981.D08.D030, REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION

Saskatchewan connections to railway porters is Robert Ellis "Stonewall" Jackson, the first Black person to play for the Saskatchewan Roughriders (then called the Regina Roughriders). He played with the team for one year, in 1930, while also working as a porter.

In 1930, the Roughriders were not a professional team, and most team members had day jobs. When traveling for games the players had to take time off work. Jackson, however, appears to have worked on at least some of the trips for games. The team traveled by rail, so Jackson seems to have been able to work on the trips. On the way to the 1930 Grey Cup championship in Toronto, the team traveled on the Canadian National Railway (CNR) to attend the game. Jackson worked on the train that was carrying his team out east rather than take time off.

Jackson appears in the 1930 Roughriders team photo, but he is wearing a collared shirt, tie and vest rather than the team uniform. The reason is unclear but it's possible he arrived late due to his work duties and his clothes are part of his porter uniform.

CONCLUSION

Black railway porters were vital to the smooth operation of passenger trains in Canada. Though the work was hard and sometimes dangerous, porters took pride in their work. Recognizing the unfair situations they were forced into by their White coworkers and railway managers, they fought hard for fair treatment. The creation of the first Black railway union in North America helped them accomplish goals of higher wages and shorter hours. Many porters immigrated to Canada in search of better pay or a more tolerant society. When they didn't find these, many returned to their homes in the American south or the Caribbean. Those who stayed and made Canada their home, raised their families here, and became important members of their communities.

Black railway workers advocated for their communities and fought to raise the standard of living for Black people across Canada. Though they did not find solidarity with their White coworkers, they fought hard to win their rights.

To read more about railway porters visit wdm.ca/railwayporters2 or scan:



ABOUT US

CONSTRUCTION COMPLETED ON GENDER-NEUTRAL WASHROOM AT THE WDM SASKATOON



The WDM Saskatoon recently joined the WDM Moose Jaw by adding a gender-neutral washroom to their facility. With funding from the federal and provincial governments, through the COVID-19 Resilience Stream and the City of Saskatoon through its Cultural Capital Grant Program, the WDM was able to create a safe space for people of all abilities and diversities. In addition to the new gender-neutral washroom, upgrades are also underway in the WDM Saskatoon's two public washrooms.

For trans and gender-nonconforming individuals, using gendered washrooms can often be a source of anxiety and stress. Gender-neutral washrooms allow the WDM to offer safe, on-site programming for the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Wheelchair accessible washrooms also increases the comfort of visitors with special needs. Having barrier-free washrooms is important to the WDM's vision: **A Saskatchewan where everyone belongs and histories matter.**

“

We are very pleased to now have a gender-neutral accessible washroom on the main floor of the WDM. This project would not have been possible without the support from the Government of Canada, the Government of Saskatchewan, and City of Saskatoon and we are grateful for their support.

JOAN KANIGAN, WDM CEO

”

The gender-neutral washroom is located on the main floor across from the Boomtown Café.

The WDM Board of Directors, management and staff thanks the Government of Canada, Government of Saskatchewan and City of Saskatoon for generously funding this project.



MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS

MOOSE JAW

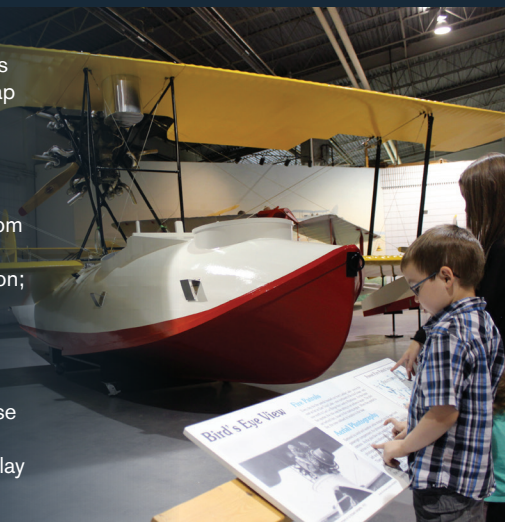
Vickers Vedette

WDM-2003-S-107

The first mass-produced aircraft designed and built in Canada was the Vickers Vedette in 1924. The Vedette was made for the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) to help map Canada's north and patrol fires.

The Province of Saskatchewan purchased five Vickers Vedette planes in 1933 to use to watch for northern fires and to survey the land. The five aircraft were purchased from the federal government for a total of \$1. Though five were purchased, not all came to Saskatchewan in flying condition; two or three of them needed repairs. After one of the five crashed in 1936, the other four were grounded.

None of the Saskatchewan Vedettes have survived intact, but the hull of one of them is on display at the WDM Moose Jaw, as is a replica Vedette built by WDM volunteers. It is not known which of the remaining four Vedettes is on display in the WDM as the records are unclear.



NORTH BATTLEFORD

Mining Exhibit

The WDM North Battleford is home to an exhibit on mining in Saskatchewan. Stepping through a simulated mining elevator, visitors can travel "underground" to learn about resource extraction in Saskatchewan.

This exhibit focuses on coal, potash and uranium mining but also addresses other types of mining. An interior map lights up to show where different types of mines are in Saskatchewan, painting a picture of the geological diversity of the province.

Saskatchewan has the largest potash industry in the world, accounting for one-third of the annual global production. Almost half of identified potash reserves in the world are in Saskatchewan. Potash is a popular component of many fertilizers and is also used in industrial manufacturing.



SASKATOON

Sod House Exhibit

In the *A Saskatchewan Story* section of the WDM Saskatoon is a replica sod house. Sod houses were frequently built and inhabited by settlers in the early years of Saskatchewan settlement. They were cheap to build and well-insulated against both the cold and the heat.

The sod house in Saskatoon was built using sod dug up near the grounds of the WDM North Battleford. The house was then constructed by Museum staff, using photographs of old sod houses to guide the construction.

Inside, the sod house measures 3.7 meters (12 feet) by 6 meters (20 feet). The inside walls are plastered and whitewashed. Visitors can step inside and see what a standard sod house from the late 19th or early 20th century would have looked like.



YORKTON

Carved Figures

WDM-1975-Y-324 & WDM-1975-Y-325

On display in the WDM Yorkton are two carved wooden figures. These were both handmade by Victor Humeniuk. The female figure was carved in the image of a girlfriend he'd had in Ukraine. He left her to come to Canada but never forgot her. The male figure was carved in Victor's own likeness and dressed in his own clothes. With these figures, he was able to be with the woman he left behind in some way.

Both figures were carved in 1936 from wood from the same poplar tree. They are both life-sized and have movable joints along with hair and eyebrows.



FEATURE ARTIFACT



WDM-2020-S-5

This shoe last and other artifacts like it will help tell Jakob's story. Learn more about Jakob Marjan and the development of this exhibit in North Battleford at wdm.ca/brick-building-move-wdm-nb or scan:



New to the WDM Collection: SHOE LAST

WDM-1980-S-138

Shoe lasts are forms shaped like human feet. The word "last" comes from the Old English "laest" which appears to mean 'footprint' or 'boot.' They're commonly used in shoemaking and shoe repair to ensure the shoe is shaped correctly.

This shoe last was used by Jakob Marjan, a shoe repairman who immigrated to Canada from what was then Yugoslavia in 1926 at the encouragement of his parents. In 1929, he settled in North Battleford and began work repairing shoes. His first shop was in the Mills Hotel (now the Beaver Hotel) in North Battleford.

In 1931, he married Lottie Martin, a Polish immigrant to Saskatchewan, and together they commissioned a narrow brick building to house Jakob's business.

Jakob worked out of the same brick building until 1979 when he retired. During his career he had contracts with the RCMP and the Royal Canadian Air Force to repair uniform boots for those stationed in and around North Battleford. His Air Force contract during the Second World War required him to repair 100-150 pairs of boots a week.

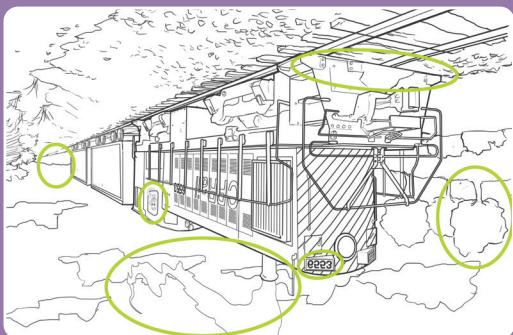
The building that housed Jakob's business was slated for demolition in 1991 to make way for a new mall but was saved and instead donated to the WDM. It now sits on the grounds of the WDM North Battleford and is currently being developed for an exhibit on Jakob Marjan and shoemaking in Saskatchewan.



JAKE MARJAN IN HIS SHOP, UNDATED
FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH, COURTESY OF TERESA DAKIN



WDM-1991-NB-11



Spot the Differences

Search for the Saskatchewan
Symbol

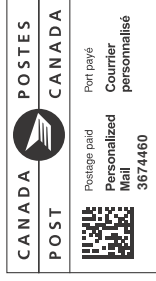


The Western Red Lily
is on page 9.

Liar's Club

1. (d) sickle
2. (b) curling tongs

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WDM Corporate Office

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Closed statutory holidays.

SPARKS Editor: Kerry Lubchenko

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[WDM.CA](http://wdm.ca)



#SaskInspired

REBELLION BREWING CO. LENTIL BEER CAN, 2018

WDM-2018-S-24