



OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2022 • VOLUME 46, EDITION 4

SPARKS

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN DEVELOPMENT MUSEUM



Wapaha Ska Oyate: Living Our Culture, Sharing Our Community at Pion-Era, 1955 – 69

A new exhibit in partnership with Whitecap Dakota First Nation, Pages 9–16.

Here is What's Happening at the WDM

WDM Moose Jaw

October 1 – January 8	Monthly Seek and Find activities and films from the National Film Board
October 15	Cabinet of Curiosities Workshop *
October 29	Come and Go in Costume Halloween Afternoon
November 19	In Remembrance presentations at 11:00 am and 2:00 pm
December 10 & 17	A Christmas Long Ago public program *

WDM North Battleford

Through March 26	<i>Hiding in Plain Sight: Discovering the Métis Nation in the Archival Records of Library and Archives Canada</i> Travelling Exhibit
December 1 – January 7	Light Up the Village

WDM Saskatoon

October 12	<i>Wapaha Ska Oyate: Living Our Culture, Sharing Our Community at Pion-Era, 1955 – 69</i> exhibit in partnership with Whitecap Dakota First Nation opens to the public
October 14 – 15	Christmas Craft Fair
October 18	Pop in and Play with the WDM
October 27 – 31	Halloween Activities with the WDM
November 1 – January 15	Eaton's <i>Once Upon a Christmas</i> exhibit
November 15	Pop in and Play with the WDM
November 25 – December 3	Saskatoon Festival of Trees

WDM Yorkton

Through October 31	Harvest Hootenanny Seek and Find
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* Pre-registration is required.

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



Renewing Relationships

I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer. Each of our Museum locations saw an increase in visitors as people once again began travelling. A visit to the WDM is a great way to explore our heritage and connect with others.

Thanks to funding received from the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport and the Making Cultural Spaces Safe During COVID through the Department of Canadian Heritage – Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, the WDM has increased our ability to offer online programming and acquired the technology to support this. Staff and our Board of Directors have already been able to put this technology to good use.

Behind the scenes, staff have been working in partnership with Elders, Chief and Council and community members from Whitecap Dakota First Nation on a new exhibit for the WDM Saskatoon. The exhibit focuses on the relationship between the WDM and Whitecap Dakota First Nation during the early decades of Pion-Era. Through this project we have been able to renew a long-standing partnership.

Wapaha S̄ka Oyate: Living Our Culture, Sharing Our Community at Pion-Era, 1955 – 69 will be opening to the public on October 12. Wapaha S̄ka means “Whitecap” and Oyate means “Our People” or “Nation.” Wapaha S̄ka Oyate is pronounced Wah-pah-hah-ska Oh-yah-tay.

This exciting exhibit speaks to the importance of true collaboration and an important step in our journey towards Reconciliation. We are especially grateful to the Elders, Chief and Council, and families of Whitecap Dakota First Nation for letting us to be a part of this journey with them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Joan Kanigan, CEO

Sparks is published four times a year and delivered to WDM members. It's a great way to keep up to date on everything happening at all WDM locations.

SPARKS Editor: Corinne Daelick

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Celebrating 50 years of the iconic Boomtown at the WDM Saskatoon.

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Hear about the noted Saskatchewan entrepreneur, philanthropist and art collector who left Nazi Germany seeking safety in Canada.

9 *Wapaha Ska Oyate: Living Our Culture, Sharing Our Community at Pion-Era, 1955 - 69*

Honouring the shared past of the WDM and Whitecap Dakota First Nation through a new exhibit.



On The Cover

Jimmy Littlecrow with horse Girlie, dressed for a travois demonstration at Pion-Era. c. 1960



WDM Board of Directors

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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

WDM Yorkton

Weekdays 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Weekend 12:00 – 5:00 pm

#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 past summer, the WDM featured royal visits to the WDM as part of our #Memory Mondays social media feature. With the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on September 8, 2022, we celebrate her remarkable 70 years on the throne by sharing this feature in *Sparks*. As Canada's Head of State, she made multiple visits over the years, including one to the WDM Saskatoon. Her late younger sister, Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret, also paid a visit to the WDM Saskatoon on an official visit. Take a look at some of these photos of their visits.



On July 22, 1959, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh toured the WDM Saskatoon with the WDM's first curator, Dr. George Shepherd. This photo shows them at the old WDM Saskatoon location on 11th Street West.



From the same visit, Dr. George Shepherd on the left, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh examine a wagon in the WDM Collection.



Also from 1959, the royal couple are joined by then-mayor Sidney Buckwold, his wife Clarice and Alvin Hamilton, MP from the Qu'Appelle riding, along with his wife Belulah. They are positioned on a stage overlooking Pion-Era festivities.



In 1980, Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret visited Saskatchewan to mark the province's 75th anniversary. Here she tours Boomtown in the WDM Saskatoon with former WDM Executive Director, Dr. Terrence Heath.



Construction on Boomtown, c. 1972

Boomtown Street Turns 50

A look back at the opening of the WDM Saskatoon on Lorne Avenue

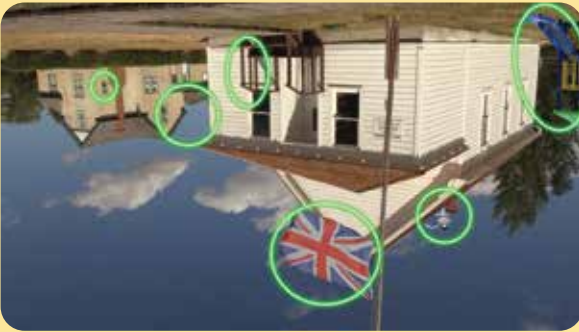
This summer marked 50 years since the Western Development Museum – Saskatoon moved to its current location and opened “Boomtown Street” – providing years of memories and a sense of wonder for first time visitors and return guests alike. Even royal guests have strolled down Boomtown Street – Princess Margaret visited in 1980.

When it was officially opened in 1972 by Saskatchewan Premier Allan Blakeney, Boomtown was said to be the longest indoor street in North America. Taking up approximately 1/3 of the 11,150 square metre (120,000 square foot) building, Boomtown was the Museum’s main attraction. The WDM prided itself on the fact that the buildings on Boomtown were all fully constructed and could be entered by visitors—they weren’t just facades. In its first week at the new location, from July 11-18, 1972, the WDM Saskatoon attracted 38,828 visitors.

50 years later, Boomtown Street remains a fun and immersive way to explore Saskatchewan’s past. WDM staff look forward to consistently reviewing and renewing it, revising older texts and adding new interpretation to continue working towards our Vision of A Saskatchewan Where Everyone Belongs and Histories Matter.



Boomtown today



There are six differences in this image.

Spot the Differences

Brainbuster Answers
Search for the Saskatchewan Symbol

The Western Red Lily
is on page 21.



Liar's Club

1. B, chalk holder.
2. C, rope maker.

Fred Mendel

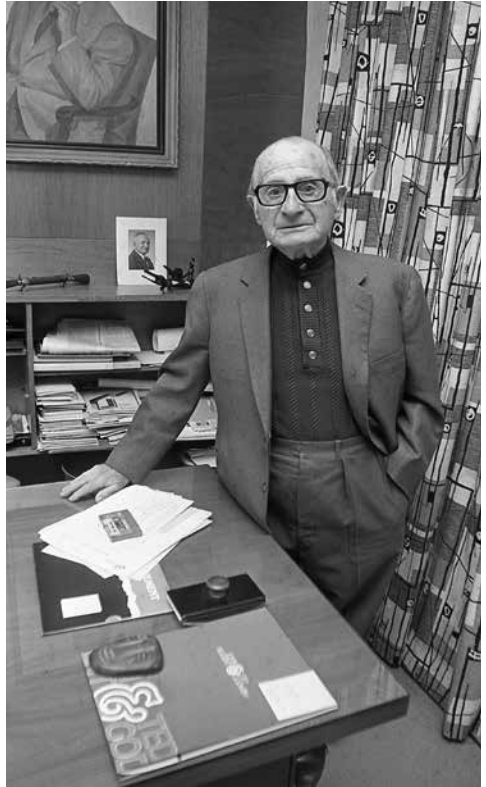
Fred Mendel was born in Germany in 1888. In 1912, he inherited a slaughterhouse and began his work in the meat industry. By 1940, life for Jewish people in Germany had become dangerous, so Mendel made the decision to leave and come to Canada. He settled in Saskatoon and founded a meat packing company, Intercontinental Packers (now known as Mitchell's Gourmet Foods).

Intercontinental Packers initially focused on packaging and shipping bacon to Britain for the war effort. After 1945, Mendel expanded operations into Alberta and British Columbia while maintaining his base in Saskatchewan. By the time of his passing in 1976, Intercontinental was one of the largest meat packers in Canada.

Mendel is probably most well-known in Saskatoon for the art gallery that was named for him, which closed in 2015 in preparation for the new Remai Modern which took its place. There is also a park in Saskatoon named for him, located at the corner of 17th Street West and Avenue W South. He was recognized for his philanthropy and contributions to Saskatoon and Saskatchewan. He sponsored prizes at local fairs and funded extension projects for farms. He was an avid art collector and made a large financial donation to the Mendel Art Gallery as well as donating art to the gallery.



Intercontinental Packers Ltd printing plate
WDM-2003-S-62



Fred Mendel
SASKATOON STAR-PHOENIX, A DIVISION OF POSTMEDIA
NETWORK INC.



Fred Mendel's 1953 Lincoln Capri
WDM-1978-S-127



Wapaha Ska Oyate: Living Our Culture, Sharing Our Community at Pion-Era 1955 – 69

Chief Littlecrow brings greetings on behalf of his people and declares Pion-Era 1957 open

WDM PHOTO



Round dance performance at Pion-Era. 1962

WDM PHOTO



Daily tipi raising demonstration. 1957

WDM PHOTO

New Co-Curated Exhibit by Whitecap Dakota First Nation and the Western Development Museum

Together in the spirit of Reconciliation and partnership, Whitecap Dakota First Nation and the Western Development Museum (WDM) invite you to learn each of our perspectives on our shared past in our co-curated exhibit *Wapaha Ska Oyate: Living Our Culture, Sharing Our Community at Pion-Era, 1955 - 69* now on permanent display at the WDM Saskatoon.



A lot of times, history comes only from one side, the non-Indigenous side. But in this case, you're getting a history from both sides from the Indigenous perspective, as well as a non-Indigenous perspective. So it's a good collaboration.

– Chief Darcy Bear

*Chief of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation,
quoted by CBC News, February 24, 2022*



Whitecap Dakota First Nation at Pion-Era

Whitecap Dakota First Nation is a Dakota community 25 kilometers south of Saskatoon. Every summer from 1955 to 1969, many of our members participated in Pion-Era – a heritage exhibition first organized by the WDM for the Province's Golden Jubilee. We accepted the Museum's invitation to participate in Pion-Era on our own terms, determining which elements of our culture to showcase, like setting up and living in a tipi camp and performing cultural dances, as well as demonstrating our skills as horse people and expertise as livestock operators, despite having to negotiate economic barriers like the permit system that prevented our full access to the Canadian economy around us.

Our longtime presence in Saskatoon, with Chief Wapaha Ska (Whitecap) being a co-founder of the City with John Lake, framed our participation at Pion-Era, as well as other events like the Saskatoon Exhibition parades and competitions from the 1910s, to the opening of the Bessborough Hotel in 1935, the Royal Visit in 1939 and the opening of the Midtown Plaza in 1970. Our community's presence at these events went beyond performing in costume for settlers at momentous occasions – we maintained autonomy over what we chose to share in public and used these occasions to link our past with our present.

Over these years, our relationship with the Museum grew from an economic one of selling hay, to a cultural one of being key participants in Pion-Era. Our Elders and Knowledge Keepers remember Pion-Era as an important part of our community's summer, where families gathered to live aspects of our culture together alongside our non-Indigenous neighbours in Saskatoon. Today, we honour our relatives' contributions to Pion-Era through this important exhibit, while acknowledging the barriers they faced in doing so.

Re-imaging Early Pion-Era

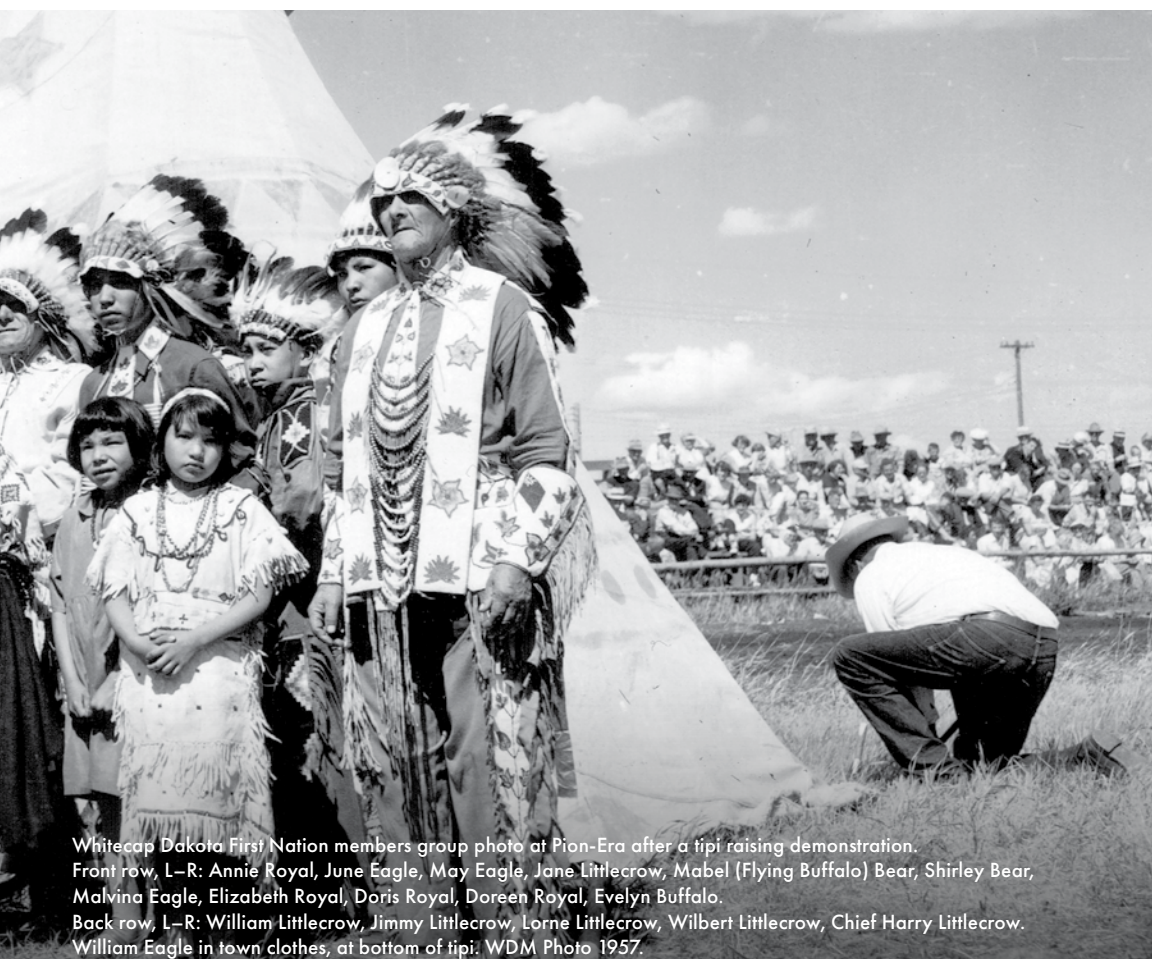
For the WDM, memories of Indigenous participation at Pion-Era had faded over time. Our project, and specifically the oral histories the Whitecap Elders have generously shared, has helped us better understand how complex the early decades of Pion-Era were. They have taught us that their participation in Pion-Era, while remembered fondly and with pride, was not without barriers. Relatives of some of the participants kept letters, for example, that the WDM wrote to the Department of Indian Affairs in the late 1950s, asking for permission for the Whitecap community to leave their reserve and stay on the Pion-Era grounds in Saskatoon. This is a stark reminder that Indigenous people did not enjoy the same mobility rights as other Saskatoonians attending Pion-Era.

We have also learned about how the Dakota were self-determining at Pion-Era, even as they negotiated the paternal expectations of the organizers. Even though activities like pow wow dancing and wearing regalia were the most promoted Indigenous activities at Pion-Era, the



Whitecap participants found ways to assert other aspects of their culture like bareback riding, pony racing, trick roping, travois building, oxen and wagon driving, bow and arrow hunting, trap setting and hay production. The women participants fed visitors with their home cooking and sold some of their beadwork. Young members showed non-Indigenous people around their tipis.

Whitecap's agricultural activities at Pion-Era complicate how we historicize Indigenous participation at heritage shows, rodeos and stampedes in western Canada. The community desired finding common ground with their settler friends and allies in Saskatoon, and connecting as rural people, as much as performing more visibly Indigenous cultural activities. The Elders have also reminded us that going to Pion-Era was fun! It was a place where momentous community moments happened, like the birth of "Pion-Era Princess" Bernice Royal on July 4, 1959, an event celebrated for many years after.



Whitecap Dakota First Nation members group photo at Pion-Era after a tipi raising demonstration. Front row, L-R: Annie Royal, June Eagle, May Eagle, Jane Littlecrow, Mabel (Flying Buffalo) Bear, Shirley Bear, Malvina Eagle, Elizabeth Royal, Doris Royal, Doreen Royal, Evelyn Buffalo. Back row, L-R: William Littlecrow, Jimmy Littlecrow, Lorne Littlecrow, Wilbert Littlecrow, Chief Harry Littlecrow. William Eagle in town clothes, at bottom of tipi. WDM Photo 1957.

Photo-Naming Project

In 2018, WDM staff found a set of photographs of unnamed Indigenous people at Pion-Era in the WDM collection. References to the “Moose Woods Reserve” suggested the people in them were likely from Whitecap Dakota First Nation. When we reached out to the community, we discovered the history of our long-ago relationship, and our shared desire to renew our connection began.

With the consent of Whitecap Elders and Leadership, naming the individuals in the photographs was the first step in our journey. Almost all the individuals in over 50 archival photographs have been identified, restoring their rightful place in the archive. The photo-naming project opened the door for Whitecap Elders to share other Pion-Era and community histories and develop an exhibit together on these incredible stories. These are histories that continue to reflect Whitecap Dakota First Nation’s values, achievements, innovation and nationhood.



In 2019, the WDM sought Dakota assistance in identifying beadwork. Here, Whitecap Elders Naomi Buffalo, Cecelia Royal, Malvina Eagle and Grace Buffalo visit the artifact storage areas at the WDM Corporate Office with Curator Dr. Elizabeth Scott.

PHOTO COURTESY STEPHANIE DANYLUK.





Possibly Chief Paul Tawiyaka, Dr. George Shepherd, William Littlecrow, 1955

WDM PHOTO



William Littlecrow, Bob Royal, Malvina Eagle, Thelma Eagle, Eva Hawk. 1955
SASKATCHEWAN HISTORY & FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Centering Indigenous Histories in the Museum

Today, we are restoring our relationship to once again showcase Dakota history and culture at the WDM. Our project has led to meaningful exchange between participants and puts decolonization to work in the Museum. Our shared authority approach restores Whitecap agency by centering their perspectives in the history of Pion-Era. We have also entered into an in-trust collections agreement to store special Dakota artifacts at the WDM. In-trust arrangements ensure Indigenous nations retain control over and access to their cultural heritage, affirming the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

While we confront the historical inequities between the Museum and Whitecap Dakota First Nation, the memories of Pion-Era from the Whitecap perspective remind us that it was a place where Dakota people performed cultural exchanges on their own terms. Sharing this history through the WDM has been an important way to honour and remember the participants, rekindle old ties and more deeply understand Whitecap's place in Saskatoon's cultural, social and economic history.

“

We would like to thank the Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Leadership from Whitecap for sharing this history with us.

– Dr. Elizabeth Scott

WDM Curator

”

WDM Virtual Programs

Check out these upcoming, online programs at the WDM.

Virtual Coffee Club

Grab a cup of coffee and settle in as we explore Saskatchewan history and artifacts from the WDM Collection. Sessions take place via Zoom from 10:00 - 11:00 am. There is no cost but pre-registration is required. Registration closes at 8:30 am on the day of the Virtual Coffee Club.

Upcoming Coffee Club Sessions

October 13: The Great Depression

October 25: The Spirit and Intent of Treaties 1 through 7 with guest presenter, Dr. Sheldon Krasowski, Director of Research and Archives, Office of the Treaty Commissioner

November 15: *Wapaha Ska Oyate: Living Our Culture, Sharing Our Community at Pion-Era, 1955 - 69*

December 20: Holiday Traditions

Virtual A Christmas Long Ago

Recommended for ages 5 and up, join us for a virtual version of our popular Christmas program on December 23 at 7:00 pm. The program takes place via Zoom. It is free but pre-registration is required by December 21.

Virtual Escape Room

Experience the WDM North Battleford's Heritage Farm and Village in a whole new way with our virtual escape room. The cost is \$25.00 and it is available on the WDM's online store at:

wdm.ca/product/virtual-room

2022 Years of Service Recipients

The WDM recognizes and wishes to thank the following individuals for their years of service to the Museum.



Morgann Chrun, WDM Saskatoon

Laura Ketterer, WDM Saskatoon

Riley Pratt, WDM Saskatoon

Lexi Webb, WDM Saskatoon



Tanya Callaway, WDM Corporate Office



Mark Anderson, WDM Corporate Office

Heather Cammidge, WDM Saskatoon

Shirley Maze, WDM North Battleford

Lillian Prysiazniuk, WDM Saskatoon

Mervyn Prysiazniuk, WDM Saskatoon

BRAINBUSTERS

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.

1



Which of the following explanations is the truth?

- This is a sock dryer. It was used to dry wool socks.
- This is a chalk holder. Teachers used it in schools to draw lines on the chalk board.
- This is a homemade candelabra. Before electricity and flashlights, settlers used this to carry candles with them in the dark.
- This is a picture holder. It could be hung on the wall or set on a table to display up to five pictures.

2



Which of the following explanations is the truth?

- This is a set of hooks for hanging up reins and harnesses for horses.
- This is a fence tightener. When stringing barb wire between fence posts, ranchers attach one end to these hooks and turn the handle until it's tight.
- This is a rope maker. Twine is tied to each of the hooks, then twisted together by turning the wooden handle.
- This is a winch. Rope or chain is tied around heavy objects, then attached to the hooks. Turning the crank pulls the object towards the winch.



**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?

Spot The Differences

The schoolhouse in the WDM North Battleford Heritage Farm and Village came from the Grey School district north of Maymont. It was built in 1905. As well as being a school, the building also served the area as a polling station for elections and a community centre.

Look closely to spot the **6** differences between the scenes.



Answers on page 7

Lemons to Lemonade

Helping herself while helping others

You're probably familiar with the saying, "when life gives you lemons, make lemonade." Without realizing it, this is what WDM volunteer Shirley Koob did when the COVID-19 pandemic meant that she was unable to come out and volunteer. Thanks to information provided by the WDM, she took her first steps into a new, and unexpected, interest.

Like so many others, Shirley felt isolated and alone when she could not connect with others during the pandemic. With the volunteer program temporarily suspended, WDM volunteer coordinators stayed connected with volunteers through phone calls and weekly emails about WDM happenings. In one email, Shirley noticed that the WDM was participating in a program called Seniors' Centre Without Walls. This program connected Seniors around the province with community programs over the phone. Through the efforts of Karla Rasmussen, Education and Programs Coordinator at the WDM Moose Jaw, the WDM has taken part in this program nearly every month since fall 2020 presenting on various topics connected to Saskatchewan history.

Even though it was only over the phone, Shirley was excited to connect with people as they learned from the various presenters, including Karla. Through Seniors' Centre Without Walls, Shirley connected with the Saskatchewan Seniors' Association who were hosting a songwriting class in March 2022. Sessions would be led over the phone by Saskatchewan musician and Juno Award winner, Eliza Doyle. Shirley did not consider herself musical but thought she'd give it a try.

For one class, participants were asked to write a few lyrics for a song the class would write together. When Shirley started to write, she found herself thinking about the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the plight of the Ukrainian people. She started jotting down a few words about her feelings until she had written lyrics for a whole song.





Saskatchewan musician and Juno Award winner Eliza Doyle

At her next class, she explained that she had written an entire song which she read to them. Eliza was so impressed by the lyrics that she asked Shirley if she would like to put her lyrics to music. Shirley was surprised but excitedly said “Yes!”. Shirley had no idea she was a songwriter.

In May, Eliza recorded the song, “Cries of Ukraine.” It is available on Spotify, Amazon Music, Boomplay and Apple Musis as well as by request on CFCR in Saskatoon. You can also hear the song on the Ukrainian Canadian Congress of Saskatchewan (UCC) website at:

ucc.sk.ca/images/stories/newsarticles/2022/Cries-of-Ukraine-Koob-Doyle.mp3

Through the song, Shirley hopes to raise awareness of the war on Ukraine and raise funds to help people displaced by the invasion of Ukraine. To do this, Shirley connected with the UCC to collect donations for displaced people coming to Saskatchewan.

If you would like to donate to this cause, visit the UCC website at: **ucc.sk.ca**

Listen to Cries of Ukraine



Visit the UCC website



WDM MOOSE JAW Observatory

WDM-1989-MJ-7

In 1913, the Saskatchewan Astronomical Society built their first observatory on the roof of Regina Collegiate. It was the first of its type in Western Canada. The domed roof offered shelter from the wind and blocked out external light sources. The roof was light and easy to turn and its height accommodated a long telescope.

The Saskatchewan Astronomical Society eventually became the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada – Regina Centre. In 1989, the observatory was donated to the WDM. Members of the Society have volunteered in the observatory during the Museum Days school program.



WDM NORTH BATTLEFORD CNR Railway Station

WDM-1973-NB-13906

In 1913, the Canadian Northern Railway built a station in Prince. It was one of many small stations built across the prairies, all transporting people and goods across Canada. In 1918, Canadian Northern merged with other railway companies to become the Canadian National Railway (CNR) which still operates today.

In 1953, 40 years after it first opened, the Prince station was closed. The station was last used in 1957 before being abandoned. In 1967, it was moved to the Heritage Farm and Village. After three years of renovation and repair, the building was opened to the public.



WDM SASKATOON

W.A. Edwards Funeral Home

In 2015, the W. A. Edwards Funeral Home exhibit opened as the first funeral home model featured in a Canadian museum. It focuses on death from embalming and burial to personal feelings such as grief and mourning. Also explored is the work done by those who perform burials, drive hearses and comfort mourners, themes often unseen in museums.

Upon entry there is a parlour featuring funeral and mourning traditions in different cultures. At the rear is a closed casket and embalming tools. Dividing the exhibit into two areas allows visitors to choose which areas they are comfortable viewing.



WDM YORKTON

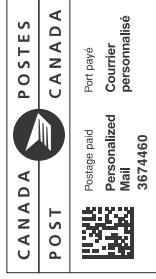
Clay Oven

In 1975, members of the Yorkton Threshermen's Club worked together to build a clay oven for the WDM Yorkton. Constructed out of clay mixed with flax straw, it is used for demonstrations.

It was originally built on a wheeled platform so that it could be moved but it was eventually permanently stationed under a shelter at Grandma's Oven. It is still used today, primarily for baking bread. It can bake 40-50 loaves at once. In order to bake bread, the fire must be started early in the morning or the evening before to ensure the oven is hot enough.



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WDM Corporate Office

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please contact us at:

Phone: 306-934-1400

Toll Free: 1-800-363-6345

Email: info@wdm.ca

WDM Corporate Office Business Hours

8:30 am – 4:30 pm Monday – Friday

Closed statutory holidays



Child's cowgirl dress, 1957
WDM-2008-S-328



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



#SaskInspired