

A Walk to Remember...

Part Four 1940 to 2015

Dear Diary: Well there's talk of war brewing in Europe and we may be called upon once again. Just last year our local Legion branch was organized to support our Veterans from the Great War and now it looks like they may also step up to advance the training of new batch of young soldiers and lead the drive for funds with War Bond sales. They had hoped to promote community projects. Their group is such an asset. I'm sure they'll return to these activities if and when we can bring the world back to peace.

Dear Diary: 1940 and they aren't showing movies at the Oddfellow's Hall anymore. After 30 years I was right! Told you motion pictures were just a passing fad! Just kidding – They aren't gone just moving to a new location. The Carnduff Community Theatre Coop has been formed and is taking over the old Methodist Church that was built back about 1900. They have 39 citizens committed and they are putting in a slanting floor and a 2nd projector and new screen. Should be an impressive way to see a film and with two projectors no more waiting for them to change the reel of film in the middle of the movie.

What a great way to salvage one of the town's early landmarks and great to see some positive things happening in the community. Dear Diary: Just finished digging the cistern under Stovin's old blacksmith shop on Broadway. Heavy work but will be good to see that old stone building still in use as the new fire hall now that the town has moved their offices from the old school building to the Court House building. It's good to see these old buildings put to use rather than just abandoned, although I hear plans are to sell off the old school building and it may be torn down and replaced by houses. The old Court House is such a beautiful building, it would have been a shame to see it go the same way. It's struggled to find a purpose ever since the court pulled out in '05 moving to Estevan. The Border Horse had their training academy in there during World War I, and the telephone switchboard is run out of there. It was a residence for a few years and then most of it was vacant. It'll gained new life now the town hall and library have rented it from the provincial government and moved there. It sounds like the legion will start meeting in the upstairs soon and it'll also once again become the place for court dates in Carnduff like it was in the beginning.

Dear Diary: The depression was hard everywhere and we were no different. Our town's population dropped from just over 500 in 1931 to back under 400 by 1940 and the poor RM fared even worse losing close to a third of their population in that ten years. But times have really improved in the last 7 years, equipment's getting better and everyone has a positive outlook now in 1947. All it would take would be one break and imagine where this town could be in 50 or 60 years.

I heard about something called Leduc #1 while having coffee at the Green Lantern this morning. This afternoon at Charlie the Chinaman's they were talking about the same thing and saying oil's going to be the next big thing in a lot of areas. Who knows maybe in 10 years, say 1957, the smart guys will be in the oilfield business down here. There'll be money to be made – maybe I should get into it Fast!!!

Dear Diary: The sky overhead has a wild smokey haze to it this morning. An ominous look as to how quickly things can change. What a way to start the 50s with a fire claiming our school. It'll be a bit of hardship for the students not being all together with classes being held in the Baptist Church, the old Court House, the United Church and Elliott's Hall. There's already talk of a new 6 room school being built and they figure they can have it up and running by next year.

Dear Diary: I knew it was probably coming but I guess I'll have to get used to driving to town to get my mail. I've been getting rural mail delivery twice a week here south of town since 1914, but I guess with better roads and everyone having vehicles, they figure it's no longer necessary with the new Post Office being built in 1954. It seems everything is bigger

is better. It's happening on the school side too. We've received word as soon as the new 8 room addition goes on the school, our school will be shut down too. It's sad but that's progress. It'll probably never slow down. How long before they make giant elevators and those five lining the road in town disappear? Or they decide, the hospital in Gainsborough is no longer necessary. No – they won't touch health care will they? Progress... sometimes it doesn't seem like progress.

Dear Diary: Sorry I haven't written in you much in the last few years but I've been working hard on some major projects for the town of Carnduff. First we installed sewer lines throughout the community in 1957. They say those puppies are good for 25 years but I bet we get 50 plus out of them! Then in 59 we ran water service through the town. The new mercury vapor street lights came next and now we are really moving into the big times with natural gas heat replacing everybody's coal and oil furnaces. And we aren't even through 1963. Like I said I've been busy. Who knows what next year will bring? Oh right, the Saskatchewan government is going to take over the Carnduff Telephone Company. There goes one of our local utilities, but we are getting a brand new government building and dial telephones out of it. Couldn't have paid for that in the early days when there were less than 100 phones in the community and the yearly rate was \$1 per month. Bet rates go up but good service costs money in rural areas.

1958 also saw the Sunset Haven open up in the community. A beautiful facility for our seniors complete with 20 suites and a 25 bed hostel. It didn't take long it to become evident that there was a need for a nursing wing in conjunction with it and that 14 bed wing opened just opened this year. Mr. Baglole really drove this project while on council and deserves credit for its completion, although it also wouldn't have been a reality without the support of not only Mount Pleasant but many other surrounding councils and municipalities.

Dear Diary: October 16, 1966 and today's the dedication of the new municipal building in town here. Quite an impressive building and great to see the R.M. of Mount Pleasant and the Town of Carnduff forming such a close bond and working relationship. It can only benefit all in the district. With both offices, plus the library and the fire hall all under one roof Carnduff and district continues to look forward, and with that new Legion hall opening last December, we'll also ensure we don't forgot our past! Great to see our veterans with such a beautiful meeting place and a great asset to the community for all to use and enjoy.

That R.M. has done so much over the years as well. I remember way back when they were first called local improvement districts and it seemed all they handled was gopher control and road improvements. They had responsibility for noxious weeds, bounties on wolves and maintained a pound for stray animals as well. Then in 1911, John Cairns became the first reeve when the RM of Mt. Pleasant came into being. Everyone figured things were good for the prairies until the depression hit but RMs had their challenges in the early years too.

Money was limited in the municipality's early history too with farmers struck by disasters such as rust, drought, grasshoppers and of course the depression. Taxes were often allowed to be offset by work-in-lieu, with man and team offering hours for road construction and maintenance in the pre-grader days.

Dear Diary: 1967 our country is 100 years old and what better lasting tribute to the centennial than a new rink. Amazing what some volunteer labour and the joint support of the Town and the RM can bring together! At least the previous rink had lasted since 1926. It seemed like between windstorms and the combination of flat roofs and snow, we hadn't been able to get more than 5 years out of a rink before that. Here's hoping Carnduff Centennial Arena is home to quality hockey for many decades to come!

Dear Diary: Saturday night in July of 1968 and the town's pretty quiet. It's not like the old days when every Saturday night things were bustling. Don't get me wrong. There's still a show at the theatre and folks are milling about but not like it used to be. I blame it on TV. People used to have to come to town for their entertainment, socializing, and they'd come Saturday nights for a weekly shopping outing. Now TV keeps them at home. The theatre's down to 2 shows a week from the 6 it used to run. It's a shame after putting in actual theatre seating back in 47 and then adding Cinemascope with colour pictures on a bigger screen in 1956. Who knew that little invention that sits in a living room

would have an impact on a community. Oh well at least they still have to come once in awhile to visit and catch up on what's happening with the neighbor face to FACE. It's not like they can get that from a tv screen or a "Face Book"!

Another sign of progress I guess, the old majestic Court House building is coming down. The Bank of Montreal has just opened their brand new branch as well. Wonder what will become of the old bank building now? When I think back to some of the historic buildings that have already come and gone. So much history in such a short time. Wonder what the next 50 years will bring.

Dear Diary: The train has left the station. 1971 and it's the end of the line for the CPR station in Carnduff. The water tower was sold off in 1960 when diesel replaced steam, but we didn't foresee that actual closure of the station at that point. The first station still stands as a house over on 2nd Street East but sounds like this one is going to be moved to a farm somewhere off in Manitoba. A lot of families passed through that station over the years and a lot of stories. A painted picture is worth more than a 1000 words....

Dear Diary: October 1977 and another major milestone for the town. Thanks to some federal and provincial Neighborhood Improvement grant money council has managed to not only complete the main streets but installed curb and gutter on all of our streets and completed paving of all the streets as well. As an old timer thinking back I remember the early days – before we thought about the environment when we 'oiled' the streets just to keep the dust down. That went on for years. The poor residents of the CPR house drew their drinking water from a well right next to the service station and whether it was seepage of oil from the streets or leakage from the fuel tanks their water always had a scent about it but they drank it anyway. Every town was pretty much the same. But not every town has their streets paved! Well down Mayor Anderson and council!

Speaking of impressive things, how about that new Carnduff Credit Union building. After only 12 short years in existence, they've become an important partner to the community.

Dear Diary: 1991 and Mr. Preston is retiring as town clerk after 37 years of service. Considering he followed his father Clarence in that position and his grand-father J.B. was one of the first homesteaders and business men on the scene 110 years ago, it really does seem like a passing of the guard. Here's hoping future generations of leaders will serve them well and make them proud of the Carnduff we become.

Dear Diary: Here we are in 2004 and once again we are celebrating the construction of a new school in Carnduff. The Carnduff Education Complex is a magnificent facility and once again reunites all of our grades under one roof. Integrating the public library to it was a great idea as well, promoting library use by students and giving the public access to an upgraded modern library complete with internet access.

To: YouHaveEmail@Sasktel.net ... Hi John I'm catching up with technology here. Guess it's 2005 and about time I got on the internet and got this email thing going. Hope it reaches you okay – not sure what I'm doing. Things are busy down here at Carnduff with that 100th anniversary celebration going on. It's a happening place but man is it hot!!! We went to that dance last night and there was water laying on the floor from the humidity. We always thought we didn't need air conditioning but I think after this weekend our next call will be to a plumber next week. Great to see such a good turnout for this event.

The last big one was back in 1980 for the 75th when they built the Anniversary Stage. It's sure come in handy for this event and so many others. Orvil Swayze was in charge of the construction and did a great job. Think he also headed construction of the Red Barn for the 65th. Great ideas and great fellow. Another fine contributor always doing his part for the community.

Dear Diary: Now I'm not one for name dropping but it's 2007 and Fast Trucking is turning 50. This milestone can't go by without acknowledging Tony & Vi Day and their family and their commitment to the community over the years. The patch has had its ups and downs and no doubt we'll see more of them in the future but through it all, there are certain people that just know what the word community means.

Dear Diary: Well 2008 is coming to a close and as usual there have been some changes. A big one for the R.M. too with Brian Miller retiring after 28 years as Administrator. Great dedication and service. Wonder what he'll do with his free time. He's a bit of a photo & history buff I hear. Maybe... he'll take time to share some of his pictures with us along with those of others somewhere on the internet down the road. I hear that FaceBook thing is catching on... He mentioned something at the coffee shop the other day about Carnduff being of a good vintage whatever that means...

It's like a baby boom around here the last few years between young families starting and new families moving in. Thank goodness Carnduff Community Daycare got up and running in May to help with the childcare where needed. Considering the old high school stood empty when the new school was built it's had quite a re-birth as the Dean Fraser Community Centre, between the Daycare, Rec Board office, oilfield offices, and fitness centre.

March 16, 2011 Town of Carnduff... A Community on the Move.... Our first FaceBook page post. Seems like this is where its at. We have our webpage too but hopefully everyone keeps up with us on here as well. Sounds like Like is the word of the year!

Dear Diary: The town and R.M. seem to have both re-committed themselves to their good working relationship they have always had, as they relocate to the Rural Service Centre building on the western outskirts of town in March of 2012. As a community, we've been fortunate to always have had their support as not all communities feel the love so to speak.

Dear Diary: November 2013 and the new Joint Firehall just held their grand opening. It's a far sight from the initial investment in 1900 for 50 buckets, 2 – 14 foot ladders, 2 18 foot ladders and a fire bell. But they bought a quality bell. It still seems to be kicking around. I must say the new building is impressive though. Kudos to all the committed people behind making it a reality and enough can't be said about the volunteers of our fire department and emergency services that keep us safe year in and year out.

Dear Diary: January 2014 and we have a new Dr. taking appointments in Carnduff. Such great news. Doctor shortages are in the news everywhere it seems and it's been a long time coming to get someone back in place. The home expansion and Tony Day Family Medical Clinic finally opened in 2012 with Dr. Moser's Eyecare Center but it's nice to see he'll have some company in there now!

Instagram Posts: HashTag Flood2014 HashTag Tragic HashTag PeopleComingTogether HashTag Community HashTag Kudos

Hey FaceBook: Great year for hockey in Carnduff this year! The Junior Devils are Provincial Midget Champs and hosting Hockey Day in Saskatchewan was a great weekend for Carnduff. Things look like they are slowing down a bit in the patch in 2015 but big things continue to happen in the town.

Hey Friends: Just a heads up. I'm going dark for a few days here on social media. The big event starts today and I want to take it all in. Gonna shut down my FaceBook, Twitter, Instagram etc. and just take it all in. Hopefully have some laughs, some reminiscing, make some new friends and some new memories. There'll be time for sharing later once it's over but that's it for now. HashTag Homecoming2015, HashTag HaveAGreatWeekend HashTag ThanksForListening!