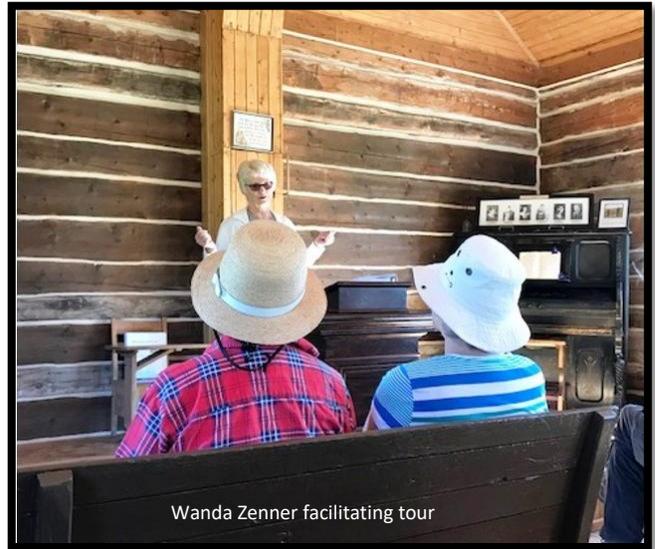


The Peace Country Historical Society Visits the Glen Leslie Church and Cemetery

written by Wanda Zenner – June 2019

Saturday June 15, 2019 dawned warm and sunny - a perfect backdrop for a tour of the Church and Cemetery. The tour was facilitated by Wanda Zenner who welcomed about fifteen members from the Peace Country Historical Society who had gathered at the Church. The PCHS was formed in 2009 and is the newest and northernmost chapter of the Historical Society of Alberta – a Society that is devoted to the preservation and appreciation of the history of north-western Alberta.

An overview was provided of the Glen Leslie area as well as how the Church and Cemetery came to be in existence. The members were especially interested in the story as to where the name “Glen Leslie” came from. Thomas and Margaret Leslie, originally from Ontario and of Scottish descent, and their three sons, Norman, Edward and Bruce had filed homestead applications on land in such close proximity to each other that the area became affectionately known as “The Glen of the Leslie’s”. Over the years the name was shortened to simply “Glen Leslie”. The group was very impressed with the quality of the restoration of the little building that had been built in 1915. Following the presentation in the Church, everyone moved to the Cemetery area where brief biographies were given on five specific people who had been buried in the Cemetery



First stop on the Cemetery tour was the headstone of Norman Leslie. Norman had arrived with his brothers and parents in 1912 and immediately built a large two-story log home where all the family lived. Norman served in WWI, returned home and continued to farm. Once his parents returned to Ontario, Norman managed the Glen Leslie Post Office that had been opened in the Leslie home. Norman, his wife Gladys and family, moved to Dimsdale in 1930.



Second stop was at the headstone of Charlie Moon. The Moon’s had arrived from Ontario in 1913 and filed homestead applications in the Bezanson area. He had entered into a partnership with Hector Morrison and formed the Crooked Creek Lumber Company that was known as “Moon’s Mill”. Following which, Charlie along with Hector Morrison and the Bickels, incorporated Northern Plywoods Ltd. - the first plywood plant in Alberta.

The next headstone to be viewed was that of William Moody. Bill was from England and arrived in Canadian in 1912 and eventually moved to the Smoky River area in 1919. He operated the Ferry at

Goodwin's Crossing from 1929 until the 1940's when his son Reg took over the responsibility as the ferry pilot – a position he kept until 1949 when the bridge across the Smoky was built. In later years, the crossing was known as "Moody's Crossing.

Margaret (nee Hague) Robideau's headstone was the next stop on the Tour. Maggie was from Liverpool, England and was a WWI war bride. She caught the eye of a young Canadian soldier, Roy Robideau, who was stationed in England and shortly thereafter the young couple married in 1919. Maggie was 103 when she passed away and had 165 descendants continuing down to the 6th generation. One of her most prized possessions was a scroll from Queen Elizabeth congratulating her on her 100th birthday.

The last stop was the "first burial site" in the Cemetery – Grace Parker. In 1911, Fred and Grace Parker and young daughter, Isabel, left Ontario and filed a homestead application on land that bordered the Smoky River in the Bezanson area. Once business lots were available at the Bezanson Townsite, Fred opened a jewelery store. Grace passed away in 1914 after a two-year illness. The substantial stone erected to mark the site was donated by a local couple, Liz and Gerald Fritsma.



Once the tour was finished, the group enjoyed refreshments and desserts of rhubarb muffins, blueberry muffins and chocolate chip cookies. Mary Nutting, President of the Peace Country Historical Society, along with the other members of the Society had a wonderful time and thoroughly appreciated the tour of the Church and Cemetery.