

**FRIENDS OF THE BAR U
HISTORIC RANCH
ASSOCIATION**
Box 82, Longview, Alberta, Canada T0L



Pekisko Press

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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Bob Arnold

UPCOMING

**Stockmen's
Dinner on
Jan.31, 2009
High River
Memorial
Center. More
info inside.**

***We are currently
working on a
web-site for the
Friends. Check
for it soon.***

***Our AGM will be
held on Sunday,
March 1, 2009
1:30 pm at the
V.O.C.***

Weather seemed to play a big part in the Bar U program in 2008. Remember, back in January, on a cold miserable night, we bought tickets to the cattleman's dinner when it seemed like a better idea to stay home in front of the fire! Pretty near every one came, had a good time in the partially renovated HR Memorial Center, wouldn't settle for less than a great meal (delivered in) or glassware, and went away, mellow, with a treasure from the silent auction.

Ken, Deb, Jim and the rest of the staff along with most of Parks Canada had to put extra focus on May 25, opening day. This was the long awaited Grand Opening of the Cookhouse. Again, the weather took a turn. Forecast? Cold and Windy! That didn't curtail the staff or four of the old cowboys who worked at the Bar U, slept upstairs and ate many meals around the "Lazy Susans". Parks and community dignitaries and the public got lots of stories and probably some lies too. As usual, "The Pekisko" has to empty the snow pack out of the hills and this year it was a bunch. We lost about a half-mile of fence and a truckload of firewood downstream to the neighbors and some of the riparian area got rearranged. The bridge-required inspection before it could be used again. We had to cancel the Ranch Horse Competition because the arena was too wet and again, the weather put a lot of cowboy competitors behind in their ranch work. On the plus side – they told me in Stavely – because that June rain extended the green grass well into August the calves weighed at least 50 pounds heavier at weaning. We bought 42 head of yearlings on May 14 and sold them August 26 - they averaged 2.23 lbs. gain per day. Not bad eh? With some help with commissions and trucking we made some money too. We were able to hire on a really good fencing crew that managed to complete another two miles of fence and re-fence that which was washed out in June.

For the most part Our Event Days were really successful. Do you know that besides such good management and outstanding staff, there are some individual volunteers who continually show up at every event to help out and others come in a minute when needed. Thanks you guys. It's exciting to have the Friends of the Bar U Ranch Association 125th Anniversary Legacy Fund established. Periodic contributions are already coming in and its great to see the support the community, in one way or another, is offering.

One of the nicest things that happened this year was that our Ranch Manager, Ken Pigeon nominated the Friends of the Bar U Board of Directors to receive from Parks Canada the Chief Executives Awards of Excellence. It reads: "Your contribution to facilitating memorable visitor experiences and your commitment to and passion for the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site are greatly valued and appreciated". I'm told, it is the highest award given by Parks Canada. It brings to mind the essence of what the "Bar U Ranch" is, and it's not about this particular board of directors. It's about the people who come to visit and learn of ranching history and the importance of the industry to the development of the west. It's about maintaining the land, water and air. It's about the knowledgeable staff that guides us for five months a year at the ranch and the outstanding management (all of whom deserves this award). It's about the ranching families and community, both past and present, that have contributed or are contributing their wisdom as board members, staff and volunteers. To make this Parks Canada Site truly represent what we're all about.

That great big Cowboy with a rope out at Highway 22 and 540 is a four-year promotion of The Alberta Beef Producers. We are hoping it will arouse some curiosity with passer-bys to stop in for a visit at the Bar U.

Thanks again to the visitors, volunteers, staff, management, and fellow board members for making the Bar U a great place to be and my job really easy.

Treasurers Report

Fiscal year 2007-2008 was a good year for the friends, financially.

Earnings from the Stockman's Banquet & silent auction, Trail Ride, and sale of memberships provided sufficient revenue to meet our operating costs.

The Stockman's Dinner remains our main source of funds. Higher rental and catering costs have

forced us to raise the ticket price substantially.

Revenue from the cow/calf operation, and from the steers provided enough revenue to purchase winter-feeds.

This year, the Casino proceeds were used for perimeter fencing, the restoration of historic corrals, and seed money for the Bar U Legacy Fund. The next casino will be held in the third

quarter of 2009.

The Bar U Legacy Fund, an endowment fund managed by The Calgary Foundation received over \$1,000 in donations.

Special thanks to Maxine Nelson & Carole Hergert-Friends; Rose Daymet – Payroll; Liz Hergert bookkeeping; and Eileen Malmberg – accounting.

Doug Longson

Collections



Again another fulfilling year with the Collections crew out in full force. Some days we had nine volunteers either restoring pieces or accessioning items. One of our best pieces we acquired this year is a 1920's teacart, which has been well looked after and just

needed a bit of steel wool around the more worn areas. The men managed to get the cattle sprayer reassembled and actually running, which Roger says is a great accomplishment. During the summer months we were happy to see lots of our items move from the

Storage Barn over to the newly opened CookHouse. Roger & I are very grateful for our crew; Bette, Nora, Mary, Chester, Lorne, Frank & George. Thanks guys!

Avril Chattaway

Cattle Committee

2008 was a successful and profitable year for the Cattle Committee with good gains on the 42 Red Angus steers we had on good grass all season.

The cows and calves also did well with the calves sold at the Stavely sale on October 27 with above average weights and competitive

prices.

Friends of the Bar U would like to recognize and thank Don Kiemle for supporting us in buying the top-quality steers, Skip Davies and Ralph Nelson for processing them at their feedlot and Tetachuk Trucking for hauling Bar U cattle. They donated their professional

expertise and services to the Bar U.

Don Moore

Special Events

The Bar U has closed its gates on another successful season. It seems that Ken and Deb along with the staff continue to enhance the Historic Ranch experience for visitors.

Special Events held on Sundays are always well attended and enthusiastically supported by Bar U staff and volunteers. The Old Time Ranch Rodeo continues to be the big

day, attracting record crowds who watched ranch rodeo teams from across Alberta match skills. The Willows Ranch won the event with the Rocking P placing second and Northfork Grazing third.

Northfork Grazing is representing the Bar U Historic Ranch at the Heritage Ranch Rodeo in Edmonton held November second – fourth; Thanks to Kirk Thompson, Cody

Thompson, Nolan Farris, Clint Stockey, and Wacy Marr for riding for the Bar U brand this year.

I would like to extend my appreciation to all the staff at the Bar U, board members, and all the volunteers who have supported Special Events this year. Thank You Bob Arnold for asking me to be Special Events chairperson.

Renie Blades



Trail Ride

The annual Trail Ride organized by Barry Hergert was August 9, 2008. The ride took place on the D Ranch (west of the Bar U). Guided by Wayne Schlosser about 60 riders and 15 people on the wagon enjoyed a wonderful day in the backcountry. Clay

Chattaway was the teamster along with helper Bob Arnold. Don & Joyce Moore informed riders about the area. The ride went to McConnell Falls and just beyond was the perfect spot along the creek for our lunch break and rest. The wagon returned and the riders

took another route back. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful warm and sunny day. Look forward to the next trail ride in August 2009. Date to be announced.

Barry Hergert



Chore Horse

The Chore Horse Competition was held on Sept 7/08 with ten teams competing with one junior. Our Bar U team came in second.

The weather was a little cooler and not near as dusty as the Ranch Rodeo. Attendance was good.

Keith Robinson

Gift Shop

The gift shop has had another successful year – thanks to the capable management of Shirley Hitchner. The month of June seemed to be slow, but the next few months turned out well. The various items in the shop that were offered for sale in the space available held a wide range of interest for young and old. Some

visitors found ‘just that perfect item’ for a gift and some found a memento to take with them back to their home country. Others were able to obtain something that would fit into their décor at home. People visiting the gift shop expressed their pleasure and many compliments were received. The Board

members are pleased to see the shop appealing to those that visit and the contribution that it makes to the success of the Bar U site.

Rose Dayment

Polo

“Polo at the Bar U’ played on the original field as the Geebungs did, was again a fun day for all involved. The cowboys got a chance to continue their experience in a new game with their cowponies and the traditional fellows got a chance to experience a bit of our history that has kept going since the 1880’s. Weather was just about as good as it gets and we had great support from the polo world.

Bill Thorburn gave us

a lively commentary and Rich Roenisch, who refereed, kept the play safe and fun for all. Volunteers handled registration, flagging, time/score keeping, security, assisting at Roundup Camp and wrangling on the wagons. This year cowboys and trades alternated chukkas 1–3pm with the cowboys up first, then the trades, and the Bar U Challenge Cup play starting at 3pm.

History repeated itself yet again this year with the trades winning. Jake Harp and the Longview

Bar&Hotel generously provided BBQ beef ribs and beer for all the volunteers, participants and staff of the Bar U Ranch. Much appreciation and thanks goes to our local cowboys and the Blk Dmd and Calgary Polo Clubs for their continued support and to everyone for sharing in our passion of preserving our ranching heritage. The game did take hold in our foothills and it is wonderful the tradition has carried on.

Byron Palmer



Volunteer

On behalf of the Friends Board and Parks staff, I would like to extend a huge **THANK YOU** to all the volunteers who answered their phones and said **yes** whenever possible to give us a hand, whether it be promoting the Bar U off site or with jobs on site. We appreciate everything you do for us!!

Rosemary Brocklebank,
Volunteer Co-coordinator

Bar U Report - Ken Pigeon

2008 Bar U Visitor Season in Review

While many Alberta tourism venues experienced declining attendance rates this year, due mostly to rising fuel costs and the improving Canadian dollar, the Bar U held its own in 2008 with only slightly fewer visitors and an increase in revenue. This has been attributed to greater numbers of large group bookings, selling more services (guided tours, wagon rides, etc.), and the fact that the Bar U continues to be a focus of interest for visitors locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

A result of last year's successful staffing proposal to Parks Canada, the Bar U benefited from two new seasonal heritage interpreter positions this year, as well as an extension of Deb Pigeon's administrative assistant position to fulltime. From May 25th to September 30th, Bar U staff were kept busy hosting visitors and school and tour groups, on site and at nine Sunday special events, while serving as a pilot site for "Explorer Quotient", a new Parks Canada visitor experience initiative.

Featured among many visitor season highlights this year were:

- Presentation of a prestigious Parks Canada CEO Partnership Award to the Friends of the Bar U honoring its many contributions to the site over the years.
- An official "reopening" of the now fully restored Bar U cookhouse, which quickly became a feature attraction for visitors to the ranch.
- Representation of the Bar U during the Calgary Stampede, where staff and volunteers teamed up over ten full days to host a promotional display.
- Partnership with the Alberta Beef Producers Association, who erected distinctive signage at the junction of Highways 22 and 540 to provide an important directional landmark for Bar U visitors.
- Two cost-sharing initiatives with the Friends of the Bar U that saw over two miles of four-wire fencing installed at the ranch as well as replacement of deteriorated corral fencing.
- Regular, every other day rest stops at the ranch by Caravan Tours, a US based bus tour company whose continued business is actively being solicited for 2009.
- Development of a new marketing and promotion strategy, which will see advertising dollars spent in new, hopefully more effective ways.
- Addition of a new volunteer group of retired Parks Canada employees, who gave extensively of their time during clean up activities prior to opening the site, during Sunday special events and at the Stampede.
- Development work to create a Friends of the Bar U website, which, when completed, will become an important Bar U marketing and information delivery tool.
- A Canada/US agreement to declare the Grant Kohrs Ranch, a Montana national historic site, the official sister site of the Bar U.
- Inclusion in an internationally distributed National Geographic map featuring the Bar U as a place of interest.
- Another successful Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, which saw Ray and Anne Rudiak honored for their many contributions over the years.

Though the visitor centre is now eerily vacant, and the echoing voices of visitors and staff can still be heard in the halls, planning and administration work continues full steam ahead toward making 2009 our best year ever.

Directors

Pres: Bob Arnold 258-0892

1stV.P. Roger McDonald
652-2198

2ndV.P. Roy Mclean
395-2154

Treas: Doug Longson
395-3336

Associate Director Secretary:
Rose Dayment 558-3936

Directors:

Rosemary Brocklebank
652-7656

Avril Chattaway 646-5577

Renie Blades 646-5753

Barry Hergert 395-3879

Byron Palmer 931-2444

Wayne Schlosser 395-3957

Keith Robinson 549-3837

Greg Garvan 938-1262

Don Moore 255-7890

Ken Pigeon, Manager for
the Bar U Ranch N.H.S.

Announcements: Stockmen's Dinner

The 10th Annual Stockmen's Dinner will be held at the Memorial Center in High River on Saturday, January 31/09. We will announce later who our Heritage Ranch families to be honored will be. Tickets are \$50 each and available soon at VJV Stavelly, Willow Creek Forge in Nanton,

Batsheba in High River and The Mill in Okotoks and also from all the directors. Watch for posters. A couple of tickets would make a nice Christmas present for those who have everything!

Heritage Ranch Rodeo, Edmonton: results

This year the Bar U Ranch team represented by North Fork Grazing put on a good performance but didn't make it to the finals. First place went to the Porcupine Quill Ranch from Lundbreck. Second place to the Gang Ranch,

in B.C. Third place to the River Ranch.

Top female cowhand: Raquel Russell of River Ranch

Top Hand: Jim Orr from the Porcupine Quill Ranch.

Memberships

Everyone's membership expires as of Dec 31/08. Your membership to this association is important to help preserve and protect the values of our ranching heritage for the benefit, education and the

enjoyment of present and future generations. Individual memberships are \$10 each, corporate memberships \$25. Mail to Friends of the Bar U Ranch, Box 82, Longview, AB T0L 1H0.

Memberships also available at the Stockmen's Dinner and the AGM.

Friends of the Bar U Historic Ranch Association

125th Anniversary Bar U Legacy Fund

The **Friends** are comprised of members of the Community, and enhance Parks Canada's programs, not replace them, nor be directed by them. The **Friends** role is one of stewardship of the Bar U: promoting understanding of the history of ranching, and demonstrating historical ranching practices. Over the years, the **Friends** have undertaken some significant projects such as replacement of fencing & corrals, promotion of the site, the purchase & restoration of historic ranch equipment, and the staging of Special Events including the ranch rodeo, polo day, ranch horse, and chore horse exhibitions.

We have created an endowment fund to provide an opportunity to participate financially in these, and future **Friends** of the Bar U projects. An endowment fund is a registered charitable legacy fund that never spends the capital contribution, but generates income through investments. Annually, a percentage of the income is distributed to the **Friends**, and the balance is re-invested in the fund. This way the fund continues to grow, and the gift keeps on giving in greater amounts every year.

The Calgary Foundation, a non-profit foundation that currently manages over 100 funds for charitable organizations, will manage the fund. This ensures that only the income will be available to the **Friends**; there will **never** be access to the capital in the fund.

Ways to give:

Tax deductible charitable gifts – small or large, one-time or ongoing. Donations can be made on line at www.thecalgaryfoundation.org

Designations in wills or trust.

Bequests of life insurance policies, real property, stocks and bonds.

Investing in the **Friends** of the Bar U Historic Ranch Legacy Fund now means you will be a supporter of the Historic Bar U Ranch **forever**.

For Further information please contact Rosemary Brocklebank at 652-7656 or Doug Longson at 395-3336 or write us at P.O.