



The Westbank Express....

I base most of my fashion sense on what doesn't itch. - Gilda Radner, American comedienne. (1946-89)



Your Monthly Newsletter



Elvis look-alike, Adam Fitzpatrick of Penticton, belts out a song at the December, 2012 Westbank Country Opry concert where he is joined by the Westbank Country Band, from left to right, Fred Mason on bass guitar, M.C. Bill Bredin surveying the crowd, Jack O'Connor-lead guitar, Ken Johnson-singer, Patrick Wright-drums and Lavern Panich-keyboards.

It was a lively afternoon at the Westbank Community Centre on Sunday, December 2nd, 2012 when local Okanagan bands and singers joined together for a two-hour country music concert. A packed hall enjoyed the twangs, yodels, strums, beats, gyrations and wide-ranging vocals of the entertainers. The afternoon began with singer Sharon Heise, followed by the Singing Sweethearts Ken and Linda Johnson. Special Guests Gary Jespersen, saxophone player and Vic Ukrainetz, one of the top fiddlers in B.C. also appeared on stage. Other entertainers included the guitar-playing/singing duo Karen Halvorsen and Dyane Burnell as well as highly-skilled yodeller Lynda Krausa. Westbank Country Opry, the Okanagan's longest running music show, was founded in 1995 by Lavern Panich of Panich Music. Moving to Westbank in 1994 from Bonnieville, Alberta where Lavern was part of the Bonnieville Country Opry, he discovered a town in need of some country music festivities; hence the Westbank Country Opry. Their first concert was held in 1995 and in that same year they won 2nd place at the Westside Daze for their hay-wagon float boasting live country music. Upcoming Westbank Country Oprys include the January 27th, 2013 concert featuring Dale Seaman plus special guests. Other entertainers Wayne Blair and Sharon Heise will also be performing. Snacks and coffee. Door prizes. Doors open 1:00 pm. Show time 2:00 - 4:00 pm. Tickets \$5.00 each. More information about the Westbank Country Opry can be found at <http://facebook.com/westbankopry> or <http://twitter.com/WestbankOpry>. As well, the Westbank Country Opry will soon have its own website!

Who, being loved, is poor? - Oscar Wilde, Irish writer(1854-1900)

From a pedestrian cross-walk warning in Nuevo Vallarta



to the Drombeg Stone Circle in Glandore, County Cork!



What do these two photos have in common? Nothing! ...unless two centuries were merged into one. Stone circles were places of rituals and ceremony quite often associated with human burial so a stone circle is where one would end up after falling to observe top photo.

AROUND TOWN

Robby Burns Day Traditional Dinner at the Westbank Legion - RCL Branch 288

Friday, January 25th, Happy Hour 5:00 pm, Dancers 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:30 pm, Tickets \$12.00, 2525 Dobbin Road. More events on the 3rd page.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Westbank First Nation

Administrative Office: 250-769-4999
Recreation Dept.: 250-768-7337

District of West Kelowna - 778-797-1000

- Jan. 8 - Regular Council Meeting 1:30 pm
- Jan. 22 - Regular Council Meeting - 8:00 pm
- Feb. 12 - Regular Council Meeting - 1:30 pm
- Feb. 26 - Regular Council Meeting - 6:00 pm

For questions or further information about the newsletter, please email westbankexpress@gmail.com Contributing Writers: Gordon Ficke, Rita Pedersen, Editor: Barbara Heaney



From the Kitchen Nook: Ris a l'amande—Almond Rice Pudding by Rita Pedersen

Ingredients: 1/4 cup rice, 2 cups milk, 1/4 cup almonds, 2 cups whipping cream, 1 envelope gelatin, 1/4 cup sherry, 1 teaspoon vanilla, 5 tblsp. sugar (1/3 cup). **Directions:** Bring the milk to a boil. Add the rice and cook until done. Then add the chopped, blanched almonds, gelatin-dissolved (can substitute thickener using cornstarch), sherry, vanilla and sugar. Cool slightly. Fold in whipped cream. Pour into a bowl. Put in cool place. Serve with cold fruit sauce. Cherry sauce is especially good. A tasty dessert for the cold winter months.

John A. Brown, Westbank Pioneer and Entrepreneur, Part 2 by Gordon H. Ficke



Pictured left - John A. Brown, his wife Marjorie and their daughter Jan, Christmas 1945.

"We had about a hundred acres of orchard in Westbank, between my father, my brother and me," Brown admitted. "That included the Gellatly property on the lake." John's father was in partnership with Cecil Clark on that particular 150-acre parcel. Cecil wasn't interested in the orchard and preferred instead to raise his 100 head of cattle on the section of that land that hay was grown. "I can remember when I was hauling logs down the back road from Glenrosa to the lake," recalled John, who was 17 years old at the time. "My brother and Clark were working with the land surveyor dividing the property in half." Powers Creek was the dividing line for the property and ran up to the Reece property. Also situated on a cliff overlooking the farm and included with that property was the Gellatly Cemetery. Brown's father made an agreement with J.U. Gellatly that if Gellatly paid for the surveying and deed costs, the cemetery portion of the property would be given back to the Gellatly family. On March 15th, 1928, J. U. Gellatly wrote a letter to the Minister of Health Department, making the request and received a deed for the Cemetery property on February 10th, 1930.

John's dad never worked very much on the properties, but was around if he needed his help. "Everything was pretty much left to me," Brown said. Because they owned so much land and fruit farming was not providing the family with an adequate income during the depression of the 1930s, their property taxes were in arrears. Something had to be done to produce the extra income required to pay for those taxes. John and his dad purchased a new 1937 Ford three-ton flat deck truck. Before that they had a used 1926 two-ton Chevrolet truck, without a cab, and his brother got that truck. Brown acquired a license to operate the truck and worked for the Department of Highways, whenever he was called upon for his services. A wooden box conversion for dumping gravel would replace the deck on the truck. The rear overhang was quite long because arm strong power was required to operate the hand crank cable winch to raise the box that would allow the gravel to exit the box and spill onto the icy roads during the winter. Brown could also open the tailgate via a nifty cable from inside his cab. That venture started his trucking business. He expanded his services by delivering cattle for Wyndam Lewis to the sales in Armstrong. "I never came home from Armstrong with an empty truck," John commented. "I always brought back some wheat or something, to make the trip worthwhile, and besides, the truck rode better with some weight in it." He hauled wood, sawdust, fruit and even coal one time returning from Princeton. It was difficult to sell though as very few people in the area heated their houses or cooked using coal as fuel. Brown's second truck was a 1938 or '39 Ford three-ton. As time progressed they had a total of six trucks. Most of them sat around all summer until the fall when John had the license to haul fruit throughout the Okanagan Valley from Osoyoos to Salmon Arm. Each year Brown hauled three truckloads of fruit for B.C. Tree Fruits Ltd. to Orville, Washington. A railway car would be loaded and shipped east and re-enter Canada. This saved the company shipping costs.

Locally hired truck drivers, like Harold Griffin, put in long days; both driving for hours and the physical labour of unloading the fruit once they reached their destination. These truck drivers would still show up to work bright and early the next day to repeat the process over again. During the hard times on the prairies they would also haul load after load of loose culled apples in apple boxes and dump them in specially made wooden bins fitted in railway cars. This fruit was shipped to Alberta where the residents there would pay next to nothing for it. Fuel was in short supply in Westbank during World War II, particularly for heating, and Brown, along with a four-man crew, cut firewood in Glenrosa. "I remember Doug Webber driving truck at the time," John recalled, "would put in three loads a day, split, hand loaded and unloaded at customer's houses, mostly in Kelowna. There was no end to their customer base through referrals from John's brother who lived in Kelowna at the time and burned wood.

Some of the trucks were sold as time went on and John bought a logging truck. He hired a driver and John only drove it when the driver, who suffered from an asthmatic condition couldn't drive. He had contracts to deliver logs to Gorman Brothers Sawmill and S.M. Simpson, later Crown Zellerbach. This proved to be a conflict of interest and as a result Crown Zellerbach bought his logs on the condition that only a certain percentage would go to Gorman Brothers. As a result, Crown Zellerbach offered to do his books and purchase his sales as well. "It was the best deal," declared Brown. John continued to operate his logging truck as well as the other trucks, but cut back on using them. The logging truck was making more money than his other trucks. Eventually, in 1965, John sold the trucking business to Don Campbell but kept the logging truck. John reduced his farming activities considerably and began selling those properties the family had purchased decades before. The Gellatly property was finally sold in 1965 to R.J. Bennett.

Brown, who had been working concurrently at the Westbank Packinghouse, was advised by the head fruit inspector, "why don't you put your name in for a fruit inspector? You have done enough hard physical work in your lifetime." John took the advice and worked for the Federal Department of Agriculture as a fruit inspector for one year in Kelowna before being sent to Vancouver. From 1969 to 1973 he inspected fruit that was imported into Canada from California and Mexico. John and Marjorie, his first wife, were given the opportunity to transfer back to either Kelowna or Summerland with the Federal Department of Agriculture, and he chose the latter. He worked in Summerland and Penticton until his official retirement in 1989. The packinghouse manager from the Summerland Co-op, the last remaining packinghouse in Summerland, approached John to work part-time as a field manager. Their Field Manager had just retired. John was reluctant to take on the job at first, but accepted the position, working for the next five years during the fruit season.

John's wife Marjorie of 56 years, passed away in 1998 from cancer. He married Iris Walker in 1999, but due to Iris' failing health she now lives in Ontario to be close to her family. In 2009 Brown came full circle to his roots in Westbank and now lives in the Village of Smith Creek Residential Care and Assisted Living. John Albert (named after his Uncle Albert Drought) Brown has lived a very diverse and interesting life. In February 2013 he will turn 98! A true Westbank pioneer!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN JANUARY/FEBRUARY?

WESTBANK

Okanagan Regional Library

Westbank Branch

eReaders and eBooks - Feb 13th 6:30 p m Friends of the Library are pleased to present eReaders and eBooks - learn how to load library books from the library website to a reading device. Powerpoint presentation. For further information call the Library at 250-768-4369.

Westbank Legion - RCL Branch 288, 2525 Dobbin Road

Tuesday, Jan. 1st - Westbank Levee. All Legions welcome. H'orderves to be served. 2:00 - 4:00 pm.
Sunday Feb. 3rd - Superbowl Sunday Party. Snacks and refreshments. Door prizes.
Tuesdays and Thursdays - Darts.
Wednesdays and Saturdays - Meat Draws.
Thursday afternoons - Euchre(the card game).
Sunday Jam Sessions - 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Wednesday, February 27th, 2013 is Pink Shirt Day across Canada. Stand up to bullying and support Pink Shirt Day 2013!

Westside Seniors Activity Centre, 3661 Old Okanagan Highway

For January and February events, either visit the Centre or contact Valerie at 250-707-3494 or email ylsolomon@shaw.ca. **New members welcome!**

Westbank Museum

Volunteer Meeting - Monday, Jan. 21 - 7:00 pm

The Westbank Museum is looking for current and new volunteers who can donate their time 4 days a year. For further information call 250-768-0110. Don't forget—the Museum has a gift shop offering various items and gift ideas.

Westbank Country Opry 🎵 🎵

Upcoming Schedule: Last Sunday of every month: January 27th, February 24th, March 31st, April 28th, and May 26th. Westbank Community Centre, 2466 Main Street. Doors open 1:00 pm. Show starts at 2:00 pm. Refreshments and door prizes. \$5.00 admission fee. Call 250-768-1593 for further information.

Westbank Bumper Stickers available at Lil' Sprouts #24-2475 Robbin Rd. Phone 778-754-5594.

SUMMERLAND

Philosophers' Cafe 2013

Wednesday, January 16th

Doors open 6:30 pm. Discussion 7:00 pm. What kind of skills do people need to gain access to information? Join librarian Tara Thompson for an informative evening on the future of libraries. Admission by donation. Tea, coffee and refreshments available. Summerland Community Arts Centre, 9533 Main St. For more information call 250-494-4494.

Summerland Dance Club

Saturday, January 12/13 8:00-11:00 pm

The Summerland Dance Club meets at the Summerland Royal Canadian Legion on Rosedale Avenue. New members welcome. Live bands, fellowship, prizes and food. January 12th band is Destiny. For more information call 250-494-7168 or 250-494-1804.

PEACHLAND

New Years' Day Fun Run & Walk

Tuesday, Jan. 1st/13 10:00 am check-in.

Race day registration is \$20.00 and includes refreshments, event souvenir and participant recognition. Peachland Community Centre. 4450 6th Street.

Polar Bear Swim

Tuesday, Jan. 1st/13 12:30 pm check-in.

Start off the new year with a challenge in the icy waters of Swim Bay. Hot chocolate, treats, refreshments. Pre-register for waiver signing. Peachland Community Centre. For further information call 250-767-2133.

February Freeze-Up

Sunday, February 17/13 10:00 am - Noon.

5 km Run and/or walk. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes, refreshments and snacks at the Peachland Community Centre. Adults \$20.00, Children \$10.00.

PENTICTON

The Dream Cafe presents

Del Barber 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵

Saturday, January 19th, 2013

Tables available at 6:00 pm. Showtime 8:00 pm. Folk artist and songwriter Del Barber with two Western Canadian music awards to his credit will return

to The Dream Cafe performing work related to his prairie upbringing. Tickets \$18.00. 67 Front St. For reservations and ticket sales, call 250-490-9012.

2013 Continental Cup

January 10 - 13, 2013

Watch as curlers from around the world compete against one another at this annual event. Two participants that have qualified for the 2013 Continental Cup are Jennifer Jones(Winnipeg) and Kevin Martin(Edmonton). Teams from North America will compete against teams from the rest of the world. The four-day event will include doubles, singles, teams and skins. South Okanagan Events Centre, 853 Eckhardt Ave. For more information call 250-492-5647.

The Gin Game by D. L. Coburn

February 7 - March 12, 2013

Directed by Monty Hughes, The Gin Game is about two elderly residents, Weller Martin and Fonsia Dorsey, in a senior citizens home, who compete with one another in gin rummy and engaging conversations that become increasingly competitive much like their card game. The Gin Game opened on Broadway in 1977. Many Hats Theatre Co. #306 - 1475 Fairview Road. For more information go to manyhats@shaw.ca or call 250-276-2170.

OLIVER

Duo Rendezvous Concert 🎵 🎵

Friday, February 8, 2013 7:30 pm

As part of the South Okanagan Concert Society 2012/13 Concert Series Duo Rendezvous combines the talents of Jasper Wood on violin and Daniel Bolshoy on guitar. Location: The Oliver Alliance Church, 6835 Leighton Crescent. For more info. call 250-495-5070.

OSOYOOS

Spectacular! NYE 2013

Masquerade Party

Monday, December 31st 8:30 pm

Enjoy music, a festive light show and champagne. Tickets include masquerade mask, canapes and a midnight toast. Tickets \$30.00. Call 250-276-4501.

LOOKING AHEAD

OLIVER/OSOYOOS

2013 Oliver Osoyoos Oyster Festival

April 17 - April 21, 2013

More details to come! Call 250-495-5070 for further information.