

The Building of the Museum

by Peter Miller

In the spring of 1969, the Historical Society held a Walkathon from Parson to Golden, and collected over \$10,000. The raising of this sum was the first step in the construction of a museum for Golden.

At the annual meeting in March, 1970, I was elected president of the Golden and District Historical Society, and my first project was to make plans for the construction of a museum. After investigating many possibilities, I found the members of the Elk Lodge were willing to donate five adjoining lots (at the site of the present museum). We now had a site for our structure. After receiving many price quotes, we decided that one did look promising, a forty foot by fifty foot Steiner Arch building which could be erected on a foundation for \$7,332.

At this point, Mr. Uwe Sorensen joined our society. To Mr. Sorenson belongs most of the credit for the construction of the museum. I designed the interior, and look after the costs. Without Mr. Sorensen's knowledge of carpentry and his leadership as foreman, results would have been less satisfying. The footings were poured by Historical Society members in June, 1971, and the Steiner Arch shell was erected shortly after.

To raise money, we rented the building to Evans Products during the winter of 1971-72 for a storage space. We held another Walkathon and winter skateathon. We sold raffle tickets for donated articles; and Historical Society publications. We received donations from Service Clubs. The floor of the museum was poured in November of 1972. We were fortunate to receive two L.I.P. Grants to help us. Construction was supervised by Mr. Sorenson, while I looked after the paperwork and payroll. The cabinets in which artefacts are held are designed by my wife, Naomi Miller.

After my two years as president, Mrs. Margaret Olson took over for a year. She was succeeded by Mrs. Ethel King under whose presidency the construction was finalized.

The museum was officially opened to the public on June 1, 1974. The opening was performed by Mayor Zazulak with Mr. Wenman and Mr. Cecil Parson assisting in the ribbon cutting. Music was supplied by the Golden Secondary School Band under the leadership of Mr. John Mutter. Guest speaker was Mr. John Kyte, the Provincial Museums Advisor. Among the honoured guests were: Mr. Edgar Dunning of radio fame and Mr. James Chabot, M.L.A. for Columbia. It was a very satisfactory day – a fitting conclusion to a job well done – thanks to the efforts of so many people.

The town of Golden should be proud of its museum. Visitors from all over the world have been favourably impressed. Your children and grandchildren now have a building in which to pioneer artefacts and read the early history of our area.