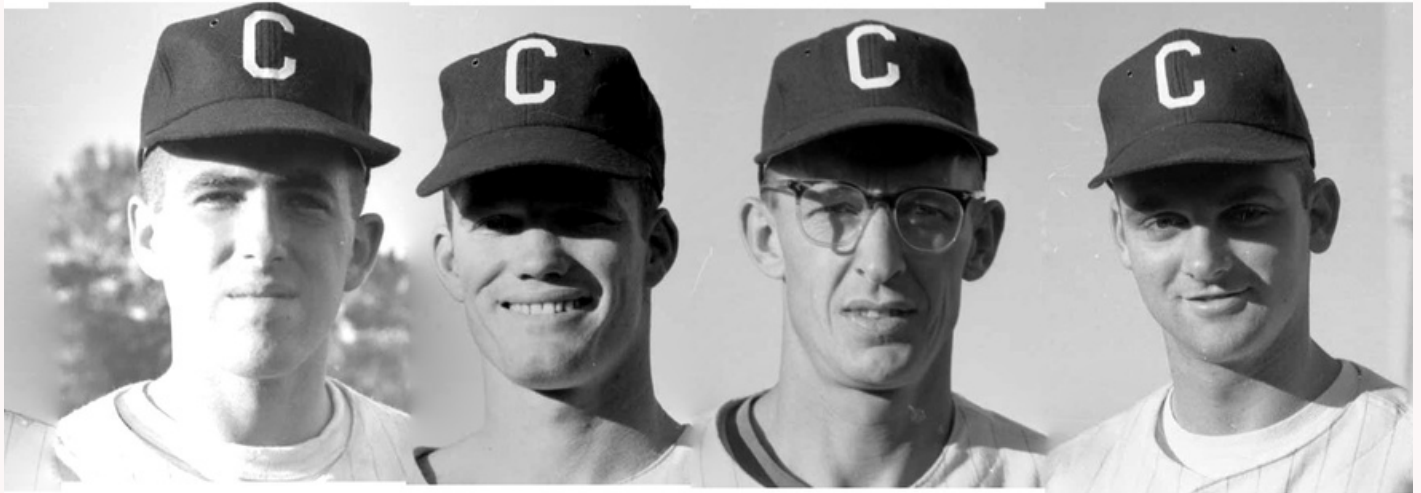


# SMOKE SIGNALS

*Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District Newsletter*

Image Courtesy Esplanade Archives 0583:10425



## President's Message

*Medicine Hat and District Historical Society*

**Next Meeting:**

•CANCELLED•

NO MEETING for March 2020

As we rapidly approach the much-anticipated Spring/Summer season we are faced with a number of important decisions, and some urgent changes. First and foremost, I will extend the sincere best wishes from our Board and the Historical Society members to our President Wayne Craven, who has decided to resign from the position in January. We would also wish to thank Mr. Craven for his work and dedication to the Historical Society. In the interim, until the Annual General Meeting in May 2020 and with the subsequent election of Officers, I will be serving as your President. Please mark your calendars, May 28, 2020, the Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers.

Secondly, the upcoming meeting in March 2020 has been cancelled. We feel it is within the best interests of our membership, and that it would be wise that we cancel our March 26 General Meeting. Since the rapidly changing status of this potentially hazardous COVID-19 virus I feel our duty is to do what we can to protect our members. It is my hope that Medicine Hat will escape this situation, though realistically, we are not immune to it. Therefore, the Annual General Meeting, slated for May 28, 2020 will be our next meeting.

Thirdly, I agree that change just for the sake of change is not the most prudent thing to do. So please know that the changes we have put forward have been the result of careful planning and direction. Yet unrelated to the pandemic and other issues, there are certain circumstances we are facing in the Historical Society that necessitate some changes be made to the venue of our meeting space.

This particular change is a necessary thing. For several years we have been meeting at the Esplanade. Unfortunately, due to events that have been occurring on the same nights as our meetings we have been bumped to other rooms that may not have suited our needs satisfactorily. There was an occasion where a meeting was held across the street at the local library. We have been fortunate in that the facility has been provided to us at no cost, however this may change if circumstances dictate.

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## President's Message - Continued

If the City incurs a cost due to our meetings being held when no other events are in progress, we maybe facing a charge of some kind. To this end we have been offered another newly renovated facility that has virtually all we require at this point in time. The Veiner Centre (located at 225 Woodman Avenue SE) has been graciously offered as an alternative to the Esplanade. After examining the facility, it appears to fulfill our needs. At the last Board Meeting in March, we had a lively discussion about the merits and drawbacks of the Veiner Center. A motion was proposed to move our meetings; both Board and General to the Veiner Center: the motion passed.

The General Meeting for March *would have* been held at the Veiner Center Arts Room; but as mentioned above, has been **cancelled**. Yet, we look forward to having you at our next Annual General Meeting in May. We ask all members to attend and give me feedback as you see fit. My email contact is: [krausewes@gmail.com](mailto:krausewes@gmail.com)



*The Veiner Centre - Located at 225 Woodman Ave SE*

One of the many planning phases we go through, of course, especially in light of some recent changes, is succession planning. This is not a cast in stone process as it is dictated by the members who they would prefer to have serve in the various positions both on the board and the executive.

We would entertain all suggestions from our members for interested persons who would be willing to serve on the board. Bear in mind that Executive positions are proposed and elected by you: the General Membership. You have the most important say in this, and we would appreciate your thoughts. The Annual General Meeting in May 2020 will include the subsequent election of Officers, so please take some time and do some thinking about what, if any, positions you might be interested in.

Lastly, The Society Bylaws have been revised and updated over a three-year process. Numerous changes have been made, although many are simple organizational and grammatical changes. Please watch your mailbox in mid-April for the completed version of the bylaws, as will be voted on at the Annual General Meeting in May.

Enjoy the spring weather and all the renewed growth that comes with that. We look forward to seeing you all again in May.

Sincerely,

*Wes Krause*

Acting President, Historical Society

# All Time All-Star: Satchel Paige

*The Famous Pitcher, and his visit to the Hat in '63*

*By J.U. Barrientos*

## 1,000 Fans See Satch

By NEIL NAISMITH  
(NEWS Sports Editor)  
Ol' Satch Paige and his gang of touring all-star baseball players, on an exhibition tour of western Canadian cities when they can find them, were beaten 3-1 by Medicine Hat Commodores, WCBL leaders, Wednesday in Athletic Park.

More than 1,000 fans watched the veteran campaigner record his second loss in 14 exhibition games played so far. Swift Current Indians, of the Southern Saskatchewan Baseball League also defeated the

the first two innings, giving up only one hit as nine Commodores trooped to the plate.

The Sailors scored their first two runs in the fourth inning off relief pitcher Sherman Cuttingham, who took over from Paige in the top of the third. Jim Vickers doubled and scored Gary Fancher, Jim Beasley singled and drove in Vickers. Fancher scored the third Commodore run in the eighth inning.

Second baseman Ira McKnight singled Oscar Walker home for the all-stars' only



Medicine Hat News

August 1, 1963

Perhaps you're feeling the itch for some baseball or sports news? With the recent closures of many Sports/Athletic events, it has turned our gazes back in time for a bit of reminiscence. Of course, baseball in particular has captured the hearts of Hatters for a very long time. I have never been a die-hard fan, but recently I received an interesting request on my desk at the Archives in relation to Leroy "Satchel" Paige.

Satchel Paige was an all-star even before his time. It would be safe to say that Satchel Paige was one of the best, if not *the* best pitcher of all time. He was famous both for his prowess in pitching, but also in the amazing longevity that he had in the game of baseball. You may not have heard of him, mainly because he played almost exclusively in the Negro Leagues, and only very briefly in the Major Leagues, which occurred very late in his career. But boy, could he bring out a crowd.

Satchel and a crew of fellow members of the Negro Leagues would travel in the off-season, and would bring massive crowds to almost any arena that they booked. The travelling during the off-season was called "barnstorming" and refers to sports teams or individuals that travel to various locations, (usually small towns), to stage exhibition matches. "Barnstorming tours" would pit the local baseball teams against the visitors, for an exciting match. And imagine the excitement, when, in early August of 1963, Satchel Paige and his team came to bat against the local Medicine Hat Commodores (see picture on front page of some of the local members).

We are very lucky to have actual video footage of the barnstorming game here in Medicine Hat, played at our very own Athletic Park. Very few images of Satchel Paige are available, and to have moving picture footage (albeit silent) was a great find. The person requesting the information was from none other than Alberta Dugout Stories. You can find more information on their write up of Satchel Paige at: <https://albertadugoutstories.com/2020/02/13/tall-times-in-the-west/>

# All Time All-Star: Satchel Paige Con't

Satchel Paige image courtesy The Society for American Baseball Research



Satchel and his team's visit to Medicine Hat drew large crowds: reported by the news to be upwards of 1,000 people in attendance.

The game was exciting due to the prowess of the All-Star team, as well as the fact that they would be playing against the local boys, the Medicine Hat Commodores.

Satchel Paige's stats are difficult to truly assess. He was curtailed in a way by always playing in the Negro Leagues, so it's a difficult comparison. But a writer for *Sports Illustrated* in 2010, named Satchel Paige the hardest thrower in the history of baseball. Paige was also noted for being one of the most precise pitchers, and threw incredibly hard fastballs, time after time.

The game in Medicine Hat ended with a loss for Satchel Paige's All-Stars, and the Medicine Hat Commodores

took the game with an impressive 3-1 win. This was only the second loss for Satchel Paige's All-Stars since their run of barnstorming games in 1963. I am sure that the Medicine Hat fans in attendance were absolutely thrilled with the excitement of the game.

In modern times, we are lucky to be able to watch preserved video and of Satchel Paige in action, right here in Medicine Hat. It's an amazing testament to how the game of baseball can still live on, even if you are forced to watch quite a lot of re-runs lately. Maybe you're interested in watching some archival footage of baseball games, or dig through some of those boxes of your own memorabilia at home. The excitement of baseball season can live on!



*Some screen grabs from Satchel Paige's visit to Medicine Hat - Game recorded by CHAT TV Esplanade Accession No. 2015.08.201*



# A Call for Volunteers

## *Become a Board and/or Committee Member with the Historical Society*

It's that time of year when we need to have a good look at the future makeup of our Board and supporting Committees, in preparation for our AGM in May. We have a very strong Board at the moment, but our current Board Members can always use support for their tasks, through membership on the Committees they may head. Committee membership is also an excellent way to become involved in the operation of your Society, and an introduction to possible Board Membership.

We will be approaching potential candidates for Board Membership over the next few months. If you are at all interested in being on the Board, don't hesitate to make your wishes known! We are now appealing to you, our Members, to ***please come forward*** and offer your time and expertise to these important tasks...the activities can be a lot of fun, and will help ensure the long-term smooth operation of the Medicine Hat and District Historical Society.

The following are committees led by one of your Board Members:

- Casino – Application preparation and organizing Casino Events (every 18 months)
- Finance/Treasurer – Annual budget preparation and bi-monthly reports from Bookkeeper
- History & Archives – Maintaining history and records of Society
- Membership – List maintenance and updates
- Newsletter – Preparation of 5-6 newsletters per Year
- Preservation & Research – HRC representation
- Programs – General Program presentations
- Publications – Maintaining publications inventory at various sales sites
- Social – Christmas Dinner and other events
- Website – Updating and maintenance
- Promotion & Publicity – Newspaper and Media Advertising and Notifications

If you are interested in helping your Society by donating a few hours per month working with energetic and positive Board Members, please let me know and we will do our best to accommodate you!

**TOM HAMP**

Past President



## Online Reference Services

*How to Continue Research from the Comfort of Your Home* by J. U. Barrientos

Let me start off by saying, I completely understand that we are in very different times lately. Many people don't really want to hear more about social distancing, self-isolation, or risk reports. Yet there are lots of resources available to you online, or over the phone, if you want to continue any historical research.

The first resource is your very own Esplanade Archives. While the Esplanade building is closed to visitors and in-person research requests, until further notice, we would be happy to assist you with any online, or phone requests that you might have. Having trouble finding an archival document? Maybe you want to take this time to do some research into your own family history? Call or connect with the Esplanade Archives, and we would love to help. Our website is [archives.esplanade.ca](http://archives.esplanade.ca), and you can find many archival and historical photographs, maps, texts, and documents for you to view.

Another great avenue to explore is Library and Archives Canada. They have numerous online databases that are searchable from the comfort of your own home. For example, the census records are a myriad of information, but can be confusing to search. Prior to 1905, Alberta didn't exist as a province, so the 1901 census can be a bit tricky. Try adding the District number "204" into the advanced search, which will narrow the results to "The Territories:

Assiniboia West", which to you or I, in a modern sense, would understand as Medicine Hat & District. The census records at Library and Archives Canada can be found at:

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/Pages/census.aspx>

Sometimes it can be tricky to find free, online resources to utilize. While a subscription to Ancestry Library can be very helpful, it can also add a cost to your research. One last resource that I find invaluable online would be the Peel Prairie Provinces Online database. As a part of the University of Alberta, this website has numerous scanned community history books that you can look through, as well as digitized newspapers. Access is free, and you do not need a subscription to view. Peel Prairie Provinces can be found online at:

<http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/index.html>

Enjoy!



0600.0499

Image Courtesy of the Esplanade Archives

# Membership Dues

*Join the Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District*

Your membership to the Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District allows you to cast your vote on deciding factors at our meetings, as well as receive 5 editions of our Smoke Signals Newsletter via email or printed copy. New to the Historical Society? You can pay your membership dues by cheque or cash. Please make cheques payable to: **The Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District**, 401 1 Street SE, Medicine Hat, AB, T1A 8W2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Fees attached for \_\_\_\_\_ person(s) at \$10 per person, for a total of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Word of Thanks

The Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District partners with the Esplanade Archives in preserving and promoting our rich heritage. The Archives are a valuable resource for family research and local historical information. To make an appointment at the Archives, please call 403-502-8582, or email Jenni U. Barrientos at [jenuatr@medicinehat.ca](mailto:jenuatr@medicinehat.ca). The Archives are located at 401 1 Sttreet SE, Medicine Hat, AB T1A 8W2, and as always, are free for you to use.

The Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District website: [www.histsocmedhat.ca](http://www.histsocmedhat.ca)

## Board of Directors

### Vacant Position

Tom Hamp  
 Wes Krause  
 Earl Morris  
 Kris Samraj  
 Larry Godin  
 Allan Jensen  
 Judy Morris  
 Evan Tonin  
 Laurel Schlaht  
 Lorine Marshall  
 Barbara Watson  
 Brenda Bryce  
 Jenni U. Barrientos

### President

Past President  
 1st Vice President; **Acting President**  
 2nd Vice President  
 Secretary  
 Treasurer, Finance & Budget  
 Programmes  
 Casino  
 Historian  
 Membership  
 Bookkeeper  
 Newsletter Editor