



Showcase Projects

Town of Rosburn /
Parkland Ukrainian Pioneer Assoc.
Heritage Conservation /
Community Group Projects



Our Association was formed in 1978. The purpose was to preserve as many of the Historic Sites as possible within the Oakburn, Olha, Seech and Rosburn area. Today we have 10 active, caring members who are continuing the work started in 1978. Several have passed away since the incorporation.

Mass Grave Site: - Where 42 children and 3 adults perished from a Scarlet Fever epidemic in May 1899. These immigrants travelled by train from Winnipeg to Strathclair and then by oxen drawn wagons to the Patterson Lake area. A late Spring snow storm added to their hardship. Many were ill when they left Winnipeg and due to the chilly weather, lack of decent shelter, clothing & food. The site where they all camped for days and so many died has been maintained by us. In 1981 a wooden cross was placed at the site, 1984 a cairn and 1990-91 a granite monument was erected to honour and remember the sufferings, the struggles and heart aches endured by our ancestors, who arrived in Canada 100 years before. In 1996 more money raised to get the lettering done on the base and landscaping started to beautify the enter area, 1999 the wooden cross was replaced. Since then more improvements have been made. We have had many tourists from around the globe, as well as bus tours, school students visit the site. Annually, on the last Sunday in July, we host a Memorial Mass, served by Catholic and Orthodox priests. Normally the attendance at the service is 80 plus people, then we all enjoy a traditional Ukrainian home cooked meal at the Olha Hall.

Swystun Pioneer Settlement Park: This is where many of the survivors from the Mass Grave area were housed while they waited for their land to be surveyed. The Buddas as they are called, were 16 feet square with a 4 foot deep excavation inside, the thatched roofs come to the ground level. Each one had a clay oven made with willow branches, covered with clay which was also used for the children as a warm bed during the cold nights. There were 6 of these built in a row and for several years housed many more immigrant families, as they waited for their 160 acres of land, which was assigned to them by the Government of Canada. There are 3 babies buried at the Budda site, one being a sibling to Michael Swystun. Michael was born in 1900 in the Budda. He left the farm in the Summer of 1923 and joined Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus and became known as "The Strongest Man in The World". In 1978, Michael restored 2 of the Buddas, which had to be restored again in 2006. Many tourists travel here to enjoy the history, scenery, heritage and the Ukrainian culture and traditions.