

High River Tennis Club History notes

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- In 1920 a Tennis Club dance was held in the Town Hall. Gents: \$1.50, Ladies 50 cents, Spectators 25 cents!

To: The High River Times – Kevin Rushworth
From: Irene Kerr, Museum of the Highwood
Subject: Article for Tuesday, April 18, 2016

Anyone for Tennis?

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During the depression teams travelled to nearby towns for tournaments, and more fundraising dances and events were held. In April 1932 two additional courts were built next to St. Francis' Catholic church (on 7th Avenue and 1st Street S.W.) .

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After the 1932 flood, it was reported that \$520. was spent for new courts and equipment. The fundraising and membership revenues must have been a success, by 1935 the club had paid off their loan and reported that it was in "excellent financial shape". They were able to reduce their fees and High School students were offered the use of a court for free.

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clubhouse, new wire and new lounge benches were installed.

There is not much information in the museum archives regarding tennis between 1938 and the 1970's when interest in tennis was once again revived, a club formed and courts built south west of the swimming pool on 10th Ave. S.W. These courts were heavily used for many years until the Charles Clark Medical Centre was built in 2011.

Today, new courts have been built near Montrose. The courts are owned by the town but the High River Tennis Club maintains and operates the courts. They are now accepting memberships and lesson registrations for the 2016 season.

If you have any stories or images about the club over the last 110 years, please contact the museum or the High River tennis club: www.highrivertennis.com

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Polo Team, 1908, left to right, W.E.M. Holmes, Frank McHugh, Harry Gunn (referee), Richard Carle, F.P. Limoges.

Today's 5- and 6-year-olds attend "Hockey School" and while they may not yet have acquired the skills, they have the equipment and the postures acquired through watching T.V. It is a far cry from the magazines tied on as shin pads, and the rinks on river ice but the spirit is the same.



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In the late 1970's interest in tennis once again revived, a club was formed, and courts built south west of the swimming pool, on Tenth Avenue. The High School classes also make use of this facility.

Like all outdoor sports in High River, enthusiasts must adapt to changing weather conditions. A clipping, undated, refers to members of the Tennis Club turning out in working togs to clean up the debris, place the tapes, and generally prepare for a planned tournament. A snowstorm delayed the event. It must have been a few years ago, as the Club had set its fees at \$5.00 for adults, \$3.50 for students and \$10.00 for family memberships. However, officers Mrs. Jack Denny, Dell Whitney, Barbara Holmes, Bert Mohr, Harry Stroud and Tom Robertson were undaunted, stating that prospects were at least sunny for membership, many former members, newcomers and beginners showing interest.

Polo

It has been claimed, in an early Town bulletin, that High River is probably Alberta's top polo town. While places like Cochrane, Pincher Creek and Millarville might dispute the title certainly the local interest and support survived over many decades and setbacks.

Polo was played here in the 1880's, George Ross organizing and instructing the first team. In 1892 the Calgary Herald reported a polo tournament there, with High River players H. Samson, D.H. McPherson, C.G. Ross and W. Humphrey



Ferguson are recalled as two skilled local players. The tennis court fence, it is also recalled, is the spot where the de Foras family used to tether their old grey horse and buggy before going to church nearby, or on longer jaunts by train to Calgary. Undoubtedly the horse watched many a tennis match, unperturbed.

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SOCIAL LIFE AND ARTS

playing against teams from Calgary and Macleod. While High River emerged victorious, the Herald enthusiastically reported the three teams as being "without doubt the finest players in Canada." Certainly two of the locals merited going to Victoria. By 1893 A.H. Eckford had joined the team.

Other early polo players recalled are Justin Deane-Freeman, Marston Sexsmith, Frank Ward, J.H. Anderson, Harry Robertson, G.N. Norton, Frank McHugh, Major Landate. Later Pastro Limoges, F.L. Watt, Richard Carle and W.E.M. Holmes would join the list.

There were many honours and many tournaments, not all from southern Alberta. In 1905 the North West champions from High River travelled to Toronto to meet teams from that city and from Rochester. They won the tournament and two players, Sexsmith and Robertson, were chosen to join the Canadian team against the visiting team from England.

Originally the Toronto Globe was a bit supercilious in its reference to the Western team and their chances against Rochester. Described as coming from a spot "scarcely findable on the Canadian prairie map", with "ponies as ignorant of pedigrees, as their ribs are of the tickle of the curry combs", the High River outfit were later described by the cream of Rochester's polo set as having played like "red Indians". The savages won, not only the games by resounding scores but also the plaudits of Toronto Globe, with the acknowledgement of their "fair ... gentlemanly team ... (and) sportsmanlike players." Judging from pictures of the High River horses, the Globe should have apologized to them also. Polo was taken seriously by the local community. The Round T Ranch today has a substantial barn in sound condition, built by Eckford about 1904, for the purpose of stabling polo ponies. It has 82 stalls. Polo grounds, too, adjoined the 1904 ranch house.

About 1898 Ross obtained 10 acres of land from W.E.G. Holmes a mile south of The Crossing, on the Holmes homestead. The polo field sported a pavilion and a flag-pole flying the banner High River Polo Club. In 1907, following the team's winning the Chipman Cup and the American Polo Tournament, the Club purchased a new polo field on the north side of the Highwood, a part of the original Sexsmith homestead. Charlie Arnold, a later member of the Club, kept this land in trust for many years and it is still held in the names of the descendants of the Club's members, including the Holmes, Arnold, Sexsmith and other families.

Like lacrosse, the polo games were to disappear at the outbreak of World War I, the players, almost without exception, enlisting. Many never returned.

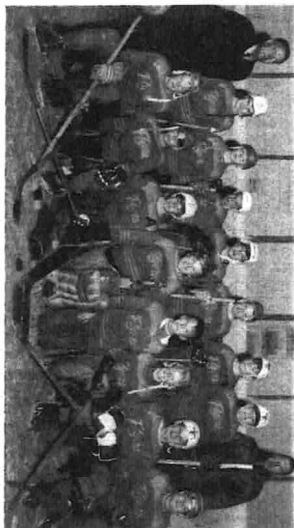
In 1927 the Club was revived. In 1930 both the Alberta Provincial and the Western Canada Tournaments were won by High River.

The little old pavilion, setting for many afternoon teas and

SOCIAL LIFE AND ARTS

Life and Legends Lillian Knupp

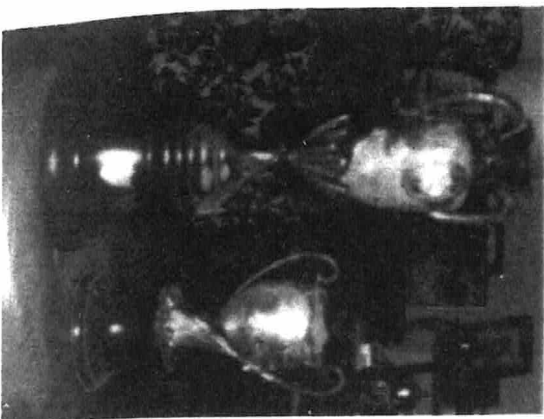
1908 Alberta Lacrosse Champions.



1910 Champion Team.



The Mosley Cup, won in 1910 and the Calgary Albertan Cup 1912 have been returned to High River by courtesy of Mrs. Vin (Eleanor) Stanley and her daughter.



game sites, and during series playoffs excitement reached fever pitch. While jobs were found for most of the players, it appears that employers were extremely lenient in matters of time off work.

In 1908 the team won the Southern Alberta Division, going on to capture the Mosley Cup and the Intermediate Championship, eliminating Red Deer in the process. In 1910 they won the DeVeber Trophy and the senior Alberta championship. Calgary never did surrender the trophy.

In 1912 a new senior championship cup, this time donated by the Calgary Albertan, came home to High River. In 1914, in finals played at Cochrane, the championship was finally won by Calgary.

With the war years, the lacrosse team and lacrosse fever waned, never to be revived. Many of the players joined the Army. Some returned to make their homes in High River, and many of the town's more community-minded citizens originally arrived here to play lacrosse.

High River's Lacrosse annals include such names as Dr. G.D. Stanley, Vin Stanley, Harry Nelson, Pastro Limoges, Tom Merriam, Sid Waugh, Harry Waugh, Frank Watt, Alex McCorquodale, Fred Dowling, Bert Poile, Red McMillan, Bob Smith, H.H. Hec Gilchrist, Mel Ashley, Jimmy Watson, Dick Behan, Pete Matheson, El Seigner, Cliff Seigner, Lenmy Moore, Dave Winkler, Mel Bailey, Alex Adams, Rene McMillan, Joe Hatcher, Joe Smith, Mel McLean, Red McLean, Les Backus, Bill Backus, Billy Leveille, Paddy McDonaugh, Paddy Bowlen, Dave Henry, Claude Riley, George Riley, Ward Dexter, Billy Mack, Bert Beardman, Les Sellers, Fraser Thompson, Gay Beattie, J.M. Campbell.

During those early days, Lacrosse kept the Town, as well as its players, on their toes.

Since the arrival of A.D. Bowman in High River many years ago, the Town has had an interest in tennis, with only a couple of short lapses. Arthur Bowman had been runner-up in the Manitoba Provincial Tennis Championships and it wasn't long before a Tennis Club was formed.

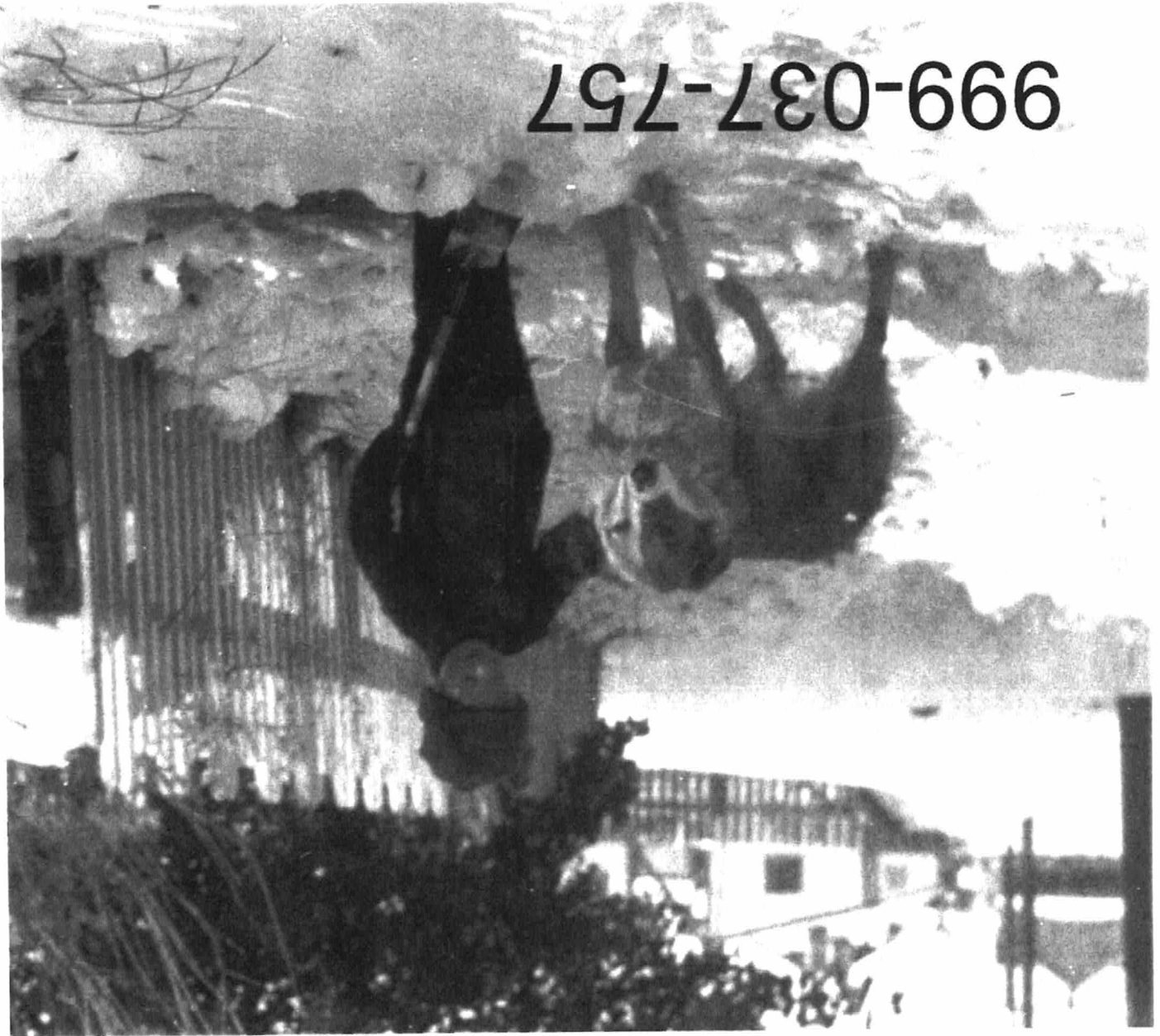
Two courts were built, on the corner of Sixth Avenue and Second Street West. Jack Kwasney, hockey player, gave tennis lessons during the summer, and Joe Robertson and Duke Ferguson are recalled as two skilled local players.

The tennis court fence, it is also recalled, is the spot where the de Foras family used to tether their old grey horse and buggy before going to church nearby, or on longer jaunts by train to Calgary. Undoubtedly the horse watched many a tennis match, unperturbed.

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Museum of the Highwood



Description
William Knupp, age 5, shovelling snow off sidewalk with large dog. tennis clubhouse across street.

1916

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Description
Lillian short riding tricycle on wood sidewalk, with unidentified friend, tennis clubhouse behind them.

1917.

• Hiram W. Hey, owner of the Round T Ranch, gathered with his son Harper Sibley and a party of friends arrived in High River in their private rail car, "Manhattan," on Friday morning. Mr. Sibley will spend about ten days in recreation and business affairs connected with his interests in these parts.

• "Dad" Partridge has drawn our attention to an article in the Calgary Herald of August 12th, in which it was disproved that all red-headed girls are bow-legged. A practical demonstration was presented at a bathing beach at Chicago, in which the large majority of red-headed girls were deemed to have normally straight legs.

August 20, 1925

Weather and Crops

Cutting operations were halted in these parts by a rain which started Thursday night and continued all day Friday and part of Saturday. It was continuous and at times it was a steady downpour, amounting to well over two inches, both in the foothills where it put a stop to haying operations and on the immediate prairies. The rain was followed by clearing weather and hot sunshine, with prospects for fine harvesting conditions.

Cutting is quite general and will be completely so by the end of the week. Help is plentiful and numerous harvest hands have been noticed about town for the past week. The wages being paid are \$3.50 to \$4.00 per day.

The local elevator prices today are \$1.36 for wheat, 38c for oats, 62c for barley, and 80c for rye.

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Monday, September 7th

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Wheatbelt Baseball League

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At the present time, High River heads the league standings with a winning percentage of .636. Nanton is in second place with .600; Red Cross third with .546; Blackie fourth with .500; and Glenview in the basement with .181.

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tending to build a much-needed apartment building on the site, there being no commercial apartment blocks in High River at the time. For some reason the site was not considered suitable, and the area was used for residential purposes. Meanwhile two courts had been built on the south east corner of Seventh Avenue and 1st (Railway) Street, immediately east of what was then the Catholic Church site.

In the late 1970's interest in tennis once again revived, a club was formed, and courts built south west of the swimming pool, on Tenth Avenue. The High School classes also make use of this facility.

Like all outdoor sports in High River, enthusiasts must adapt to changing weather conditions. A clipping, undated, refers to members of the Tennis Club turning out in working togs to clean up the debris, place the tapes, and generally prepare for a planned tournament. A snowstorm delayed the event. It must have been a few years ago, as the Club had set its fees at \$5.00 for adults, \$3.50 for students and \$10.00 for family memberships. However, officers Mrs. Jack Denny, Dell Whitney, Barbara Holmes, Bert Mohr, Harry Stroud and Tom Robertson were undaunted, stating that prospects were at least sunny for membership, many former members, newcomers and beginners showing interest.

Polo

It has been claimed, in an early Town bulletin, that High River is probably Alberta's top polo town. While places like Cochrane, Pincher Creek and Millarville might dispute the title certainly the local interest and support survived over many decades and setbacks.

Polo was played here in the 1880's, George Ross organizing and instructing the first team. In 1892 the Calgary Herald reported a polo tournament there, with High River players H. Samson, D.H. McPherson, C.G. Ross and W. Humphrey



Ferguson are recalled as two skilled local players. The tennis court fence, it is also recalled, is the spot where the de Foras family used to tether their old grey horse and buggy before going to church nearby, or on longer jaunts by train to Calgary. Undoubtedly the horse watched many a tennis match, unperturbed.

In 1926 the tennis courts included a "pavilion". During the 1940's, Bill Mitchell having sold his lake and the Kid T.V. rights, bought the old tennis court property in 190

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playing against teams from Calgary and Macleod. While High River emerged victorious, the Herald enthusiastically reported the three teams as being "without doubt the finest players in Canada." Certainly two of the locals merited going to Victoria. By 1893 A.H. Eckford had joined the team.

Other early polo players recalled are Justin Deane-Freeman, Marston SexSmith, Frank Ward, J.H. Anderson, Harry Robertson, G.N. Norton, Frank McHugh, Major Lantdale. Later Pastro Limoges, F.L. Watt, Richard Carle and W.E.M. Holmes would join the list.

There were many honours and many tournaments, not all from southern Alberta. In 1905 the North West champions from High River travelled to Toronto to meet teams from that city and from Rochester. They won the tournament and two players, SexSmith and Robertson, were chosen to join the Canadian team against the visiting team from England.

Originally the Toronto Globe was a bit supercilious in its reference to the Western team and their chances against Rochester. Described as coming from a spot "scarcely findable on the Canadian prairie map", with "ponies as ignorant of pedigrees, as their ribs are of the tickle of the curry combs", the High River outfit were later described by the cream of Rochester's polo set as having played like "red Indians". The savages won, not only the games by resounding scores but also the plaudits of Toronto Globe, with the acknowledgement of their "fair ... gentlemanly team ... (and) sportsmanlike players." Judging from pictures of the High River horses, the Globe should have apologized to them also.

Polo was taken seriously by the local community. The Round T Ranch today has a substantial barn in sound condition, built by Eckford about 1904, for the purpose of stabling polo ponies. It has 82 stalls. Polo grounds, too, adjoined the 1904 ranch house.

About 1898 Ross obtained 10 acres of land from W.E.G. Holmes a mile south of The Crossing, on the Holmes homestead. The polo field sported a pavilion and a flag-pole flying the banner High River Polo Club. In 1907, following the team's winning the Chipman Cup and the American Polo Tournament, the Club purchased a new polo field on the north side of the Highwood, a part of the original SexSmith homestead. Charlie Arnold, a later member of the Club, kept this land in trust for many years and it is still held in the names of the descendants of the Club's members, including the Holmes, Arnold, SexSmith and other families.

Like lacrosse, the polo games were to disappear at the outbreak of World War I, the players, almost without exception, enlisting. Many never returned.

In 1927 the Club was revived. In 1930 both the Alberta Provincial and the Western Canada Tournaments were won by High River.

The little old pavilion, setting for many afternoon teas and

Life and Legends Lillian Knupp

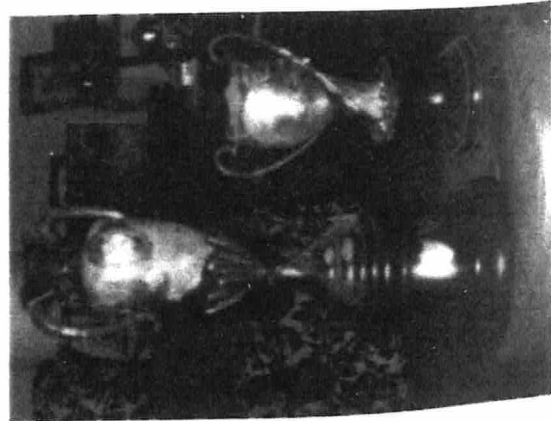


1908 Alberta Lacrosse Champions.



1910 Champion Team.

The Mosley Cup, won in 1910 and the Calgary Albertan Cup 1912 have been returned to High River by courtesy of Mrs. Vin (Eleanor) Stanley and her daughter.



game sites, and during series playoffs excitement reached fever pitch. While jobs were found for most of the players, it appears that employers were extremely lenient in matters of time off work.

In 1908 the team won the Southern Alberta Division, going on to capture the Mosley Cup and the Intermediate Championship, eliminating Red Deer in the process. In 1910 they won the DeVeber Trophy and the senior Alberta championship. Calgary never did surrender the trophy.

In 1912 a new senior championship cup, this time donated by the Calgary Albertan, came home to High River. In 1914, in finals played at Cochrane, the championship was finally won by Calgary.

With the war years, the lacrosse team and lacrosse fever waned, never to be revived. Many of the players joined the Army. Some returned to make their homes in High River, and many of the town's more community-minded citizens originally arrived here to play lacrosse.

High River's Lacrosse annals include such names as Dr. G.D. Stanley, Vin Stanley, Harry Nelson, Pastro Limoges, Tom Merriam, Sid Waugh, Harry Waugh, Frank Watt, Alex McCorquodale, Fred Dowling, Bert Poile, Red McMillan, Bob Smith, H.H. Hec Gilchrist, Mel Ashley, Jimmy Watson, Dick Behan, Pete Matheson, Elt Seigner, Cliff Seigner, Lenny Moore, Dave Winkler, Mel Bailey, Alex Adams, Renne McMillan, Joe Hatcher, Joe Smith, Mel McLean, Red McLean, Les Backus, Bill Backus, Billy Leveille, Paddy McDonough, Paddy Bowlen, Dave Henry, Claude Riley, George Riley, Ward Dexter, Billy Mack, Bert Beardman, Les Sellers, Fraser Thompson, Gay Beattie, J.M. Campbell.

During those early days, Lacrosse kept the Town, as well as its players, on their toes.

Since the arrival of A.D. Bowman in High River many years ago, the Town has had an interest in tennis, with only a couple of short lapses. Arthur Bowman had been runner-up in the Manitoba Provincial Tennis Championships and it wasn't long before a Tennis Club was formed.

Two courts were built, on the corner of Sixth Avenue and Second Street West. Jack Kwasney, hockey player, gave tennis lessons during the summer, and Joe Robertson and Duke Ferguson are recalled as two skilled local players.

The tennis court fence, it is also recalled, is the spot where the de Foras family used to tether their old grey horse and buggy before going to church nearby, or on longer jaunts by train to Calgary. Undoubtedly the horse watched many a tennis match, unperturbed.

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Description

lillian knupp, age 5, shovelling snow off sidewalk with large dog. tennis clubhouse across street.

1916

999-037-768



Description

lillian short riding tricycle on wood sidewalk, with unidentified friend, tennis clubhouse behind them.

1917.