

# Verna Reid

*"Women Between"*



Verna Maud (MacKay) Reid, U.E., B.A., M.A., Ph.D.  
Photo (2003) courtesy of Verna Reid

Verna's adult life has centred around her marriage to Craig Reid and their three children who are shown



in the photo to the left. Craig worked as a social worker for the John Howard Society of Alberta and then became an Alderman for the City of Calgary for fifteen years (1977-1992).

From the left: Lois Reid, U.E., Susan Billington, U.E., Verna Reid, John Reid, 2013 Photo courtesy of Verna Reid

Lois Reid is an elementary school principal with the Calgary Board

of Education, Susan (Reid) Billington, Q.C., is a lawyer with the Alberta Law Society, and John is Prairie Regional Director for the Canadian Music Centre. Verna has six grandchildren and five great grandchildren, all in and around Calgary. So, there are a lot of prospective members in the Reid clan for the UEL, Calgary Branch.

Verna received a B.A. Honours – Philosophy (English or History) from the University of Toronto in 1950. She followed that degree with an M.A. from the English Department, University of Calgary in 1972 and a Ph.D. from the Department of Communication and Culture, University of Calgary in 2003. From 1964 - 1967, Verna worked as a teacher at Emily Follensbee School in Calgary. Then she was one of the first women to be hired as an instructor (1967) at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) where she worked for 18 years in the Communication Arts Department. 1985-1986 saw Verna as the Program Coordinator of the Communication Arts Department at SAIT and from 1986 – 1994, she was an instructor and Chair of the Liberal Arts Department for the Alberta College of Art and Design (ACAD). Verna then completed her teaching life as a sessional instructor at the University of Calgary from 1995-1998 while working on her Ph.D. She was named Woman of Distinction in Arts and Culture by the YWCA in 1992 and Lecturer Emeritus at ACAD in 1994.

Verna's latest publication is a book about four women who came into the prime of their careers after the age of fifty. She published this book when she was 80 years of age. It can be found as:

Reid, Verna, *Women Between: Construction of Self in the Work of Sharon Butala, Agnetha Dyck, Mary Meigs, and Mary Pratt*, University of Calgary Press, 2008

She also published many articles in *Story*, an Alberta College of Art and Design Publication, as well as articles in scholarly journals from 1975-2001. Titles include:

- *Carr, Emily (1871-1945) Canadian Painter, Autobiographer and Diarist*, 2001
- *Re-ordering Emily: The Shifting Perceptions of Emily Carr*, 1999
- *Tremulous Times: Literature for the Adolescent*, 1984
- *Fantasy in Canadian Children's Literature*, 1981
- *From Anne of Green Gables to Jacob Two-Two*, 1976
- *The Small Town in Canadian Literature*, 1975

Verna's many accomplishments include conference presentations and appointments on Boards:

- 2004-2010: Board member, Public Art, City of Calgary
- 1997: Presenter, Women and Texts Conference, Leeds, England
- 1995-2002: Board member, Calgary Allied Arts Foundation, City of Calgary
- 1990-1995: Board member, Muttart Art Gallery
- 1988-1990: Member, American Institute of Graphic Arts
- 1988: Member of the Official Hosting program, City of Calgary XV Olympic Winter Games
- 1985-1992: Member and Vice-Chair, The Alberta Foundation for the Literary Arts
- 1985: Associate Program Chair, Annual Conference, Federation of Canadian Municipalities
- 1981: Chair, the Pacific Northwest Conference on English

In the 1980s Verna had also found time to return to her love of landscape painting. She has studied in various Canadian and international locations, participated in many juried shows, and her work appears in private and corporate collections.<sup>1</sup>

## **LOYALIST ANCESTOR INFORMATION**

Verna has two certificates proving two Loyalist ancestors. They will be listed separately.

### **First Loyalist ancestor is as follows: <sup>2</sup>**

Generation 1: **Verna Reid**

Generation 2: **Edna Josephine Bell** (b. 1901; m. 1919; d. 1982) and John George MacKay

Generation 3: **Mildred Maud Brouse** (b. 1877; m. 1897; d. 1941) and William Enoch Bell

Generation 4: **Lucretia Elizabeth Holmes** (b. 1855; m. 1874; d. 1924) and John Reuben Brouse

Generation 5: **Michael Henry Brouse** (b. 1821) and Sarah Ann Green

Generation 6: **Peter Brouse Jr.** (b. 1791)

Generation 7: **Peter Brouse Sr.** (b. 1766; d. 1809)

Generation 8: **John Brouse** (d. 1777)

### **Second Loyalist ancestor is as follows: <sup>3</sup>**

Generation 1: **Verna Reid**

Generation 2: **Edna Josephine Bell** (b. 1901; m. 1919; d. 1982) and John George MacKay

Generation 3: **Mildred Maud Brouse** (b. 1877; m. 1897; d. 1941) and William Enoch Bell

Generation 4: **Lucretia Elizabeth Holmes** (b. 1855; m. 1874; d. 1924) and John Reuben Brouse

Generation 5: **Isaac Peter Holmes** (b. 1814; m. 1838; d. 1888) and Catherine Kominsky

Generation 6: **Peter Holmes** (b. 1789; m. 1812; d. 1817) and Catherine Strape

Generation 7: **John Holmes** and Elizabeth

## EMIGRATION WEST OF ONTARIO

Stories of the emigration of the Brouse family to western Canada as remembered by Verna Reid are told below.

Verna states, "My first remembrances of mention of the Brouses comes from stories that were told to me by my grandmother when I was a little girl in Winnipeg. Most of these stories centered around the town of Chip Lake in Central Alberta, a railroad stop that no longer exists as such. In 2014, the nearest town to that location is called Wildwood.

Grannie Brouse (Lucretia Elizabeth Holmes Brouse, 1855-1924) was a strong woman who decided to leave Bath, Ontario, to make her fortune feeding the railroad gangs in the west. That took her and her husband to Chip Lake, Alberta. Grannie Brouse was acclaimed as one of the first pioneer women east of



Edmonton and Grandpa Brouse was a beloved fiddler in the area. They left behind a daughter, Mildred Maud Brouse (1877-1941), who had married William Enoch Bell (Billy), a book salesman. In those days, an author would give their books to a salesman to distribute and sell because there were no marketing facilities. Photo to the left is Lucretia Elizabeth (Holmes) Brouse and her son, Charles Brouse in Vancouver, circa 1920.

Photo courtesy of Verna Reid

Billy and Maud Bell had one daughter, Edna Josephine (1901-1982). When Billy died, Maud decided to visit her mother in Chip Lake and Josephine was left behind in Collins Bay, Ontario, with her Grandmother Bell. Soon after arriving in Chip Lake, Maud met and married Jim MacKay. And when Grandmother Bell died, Josephine at the age of fifteen also travelled west on the railroad to Chip Lake.

Josephine loved her life in Chip Lake as it was full of music and social events. She sang along with the piano and she remembered lots of music. Jim MacKay's younger brother, John, fell in love with Josephine, the girl with the beautiful red hair, and they married in 1919. So it was that both my mother and grandmother married brothers.

The MacKay brothers moved around to find work in the construction business and that took them to Manitoba where they helped in the building (1929-1931) of the Seven Sisters Power Plant. It was in Winnipeg where my earliest memories of the stories of Chip Lake began. I see it as a happy place full of music and as a place to find love.

The Reids moved to Calgary from Toronto on February 1, 1961. The one connection we had to Alberta was through the family's stories of Chip Lake. There were still Brouses there so accordingly that summer we headed up to the highway between Edmonton and Edson to find Chip Lake.

We found the actual Lake and our grandmother's two brothers, Reuben, John and wife Annie on their farm but the town was long gone. The railroad stop was discontinued long ago. Reuben ran the remaining general store and John took tourists hunting and fishing. They all remembered my grandmother Maud and her mother, Grannie Brouse. And Annie gave me a recipe for Maud's favourite cake. This trip was in the nature of a pilgrimage and, to top it off, my young children got to chase the chickens around the barnyard, great fun for city kids.

We were glad we had made the effort because not too long after, Uncle Reuben passed away. We went to the funeral and met the other brother, Charles, from Los Angeles who had "made good" in the packaging business and whose appearance in the silent films of Charlie Chaplin was part of family lore. We left with enlarged senses of family." <sup>1</sup>

#### **Literature Cited**

1. Reid, Verna, Personal Communication, 2014
2. Reid Verna, Application for UEL certification using John Brouse, 2012
3. Reid, Verna, Application for UEL certification using John Holmes, 2012