Alberta’s Second Century Begins!

Alberta’s Provincewide Birthday Party

It was a party for the history books. On September 1, more than 250,000 Albertans joined together to celebrate their province’s 100th birthday with entertainment, fun and fireworks.

While many communities hosted their own celebrations, 10 communities across the province hosted official AlbertaSpirit parties. The festivities were also broadcast live on television and on the Internet for all to see. Performances by some of Alberta’s top artists were broadcast live on massive jumbotrons to all 10 AlbertaSpirit party locations. k.d. lang moved audiences with her song *Hallelujah*. Crowds across the province shared in Tom Jackson’s Aboriginal rendition of *Water, Wind and Fire*. Bobby Curtola had people out of their seats dancing to some classic rock and roll.

The province-wide party culminated at 9:55 p.m. when Premier Ralph Klein, in Calgary, launched a simultaneous fireworks display around the province. The fireworks included representations of Alberta’s trademark wild rose, blue sky and yellow canola fields, and were set to live music created for the event and performed by the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the Alberta Centennial Jazz Band.

Each community also added its own unique elements to the day. Events ranged from artisan displays and local performers, to a hockey and figure skating exhibition, to a rocking celebration of small town Alberta.

What a Year it has Been!

From family reunions to local celebrations and a provincewide birthday bash, 2005 has been absolutely jam-packed with centennial events and activities.

Alberta’s Minister of Community Development was thrilled, but not surprised, by the thousands of unique and meaningful ways Albertans paid tribute to their province.

“If there is one thing Albertans have in spades it’s ingenuity,” said Gary Mar. “The scope of our centennial celebration really demonstrates just how much creativity, energy and pride there is in this province. Albertans went the extra mile to make our centennial year special and memorable.”

Although, the centennial year is now behind us, the memories will remain, along with the hundreds of enduring legacies that Albertans have created. Our province is beginning its second century with pride, prosperity and unswerving optimism.
Alberta’s Capital City Celebrations

Edmonton Gets an Early Start

Alberta’s 100th birthday party got off to an early start in Edmonton, the province’s capital city. The pancakes were sizzling and the entertainment was hot as the day’s activities got underway with the city-hosted Capital ‘E’ Centennial Breakfast. A bright-eyed and bushy-tailed crowd cheered as Mayor Stephen Mandel added the City of Edmonton’s contribution to the Alberta Centennial Time Capsule. Premier Klein and Community Development Minister Gary Mar also took part in the early-bird festivities.

AlbertaSpirit Kicks Off in the Capital

The Government of Alberta’s official festivities kicked-off over the lunch hour with a special ceremony on the grounds of the provincial legislature. A huge crowd was on hand to watch performances and join the Governor General, Prime Minister, Lieutenant Governor and Premier as they officially started the AlbertaSpirit celebrations. The highlight of the afternoon was an entertaining re-enactment of Alberta’s inauguration. Local actors brought some of Alberta’s most famous residents of the last century to life. To end the afternoon, Alberta’s birthday cake was cut and served to all in attendance.

Fireworks Light up the Legislature

From the late morning until the fireworks were over, Alberta’s Legislature grounds were a hive of activity. Tens of thousands of Albertans ventured to the site to check out military and historical displays, enjoy munchies and take in first-rate entertainment.

Figure skating legend Kurt Browning hosted the festivities and welcomed a variety of home-grown acts ranging from the polka sounds of The Emeralds to the fantastic fiddling of Barrage.

An evening jam-packed with music and fun ended with a spectacular fireworks show illuminating the province’s majestic legislature building. The scene was nothing short of stunning – the perfect finale to Alberta’s big day of celebration.
From jugglers and magicians to Elvis impersonators and face painters, Calgary’s September 1 centennial celebration – the Brilliant City Festival – was a veritable smorgasbord of fun and frivolity.

The Olympic Plaza Cultural District and the EPCOR Centre for the Performing Arts were full of energy and colour as the crowds took in street performers, followed the progress of a unique roving play and watched a variety of local entertainers. A massive 100-foot birthday cake was served to the thousands of revellers enjoying the afternoon’s activities.

Later in the evening, Premier Klein pushed a button setting off the simultaneous centennial fireworks displays across the province. The display in Calgary itself was a crowd pleaser, with dazzling explosions launched off buildings in the area.

Did you know...

Alberta’s centennial website, albertacentennial.ca, received seven million hits and posted more than 1900 community events in 2005!
Lethbridge

Lethbridge Rocks!
Alberta’s city of the south celebrated the centennial in its own unique way – with a musical extravaganza! New West Theatre packed the stands at the Exhibition Park for a rollicking evening of hot tunes and cool dance moves. When the show finished, the crowd made its way over to the Henderson Lake Park for the fireworks. The display was stunning, reflected in the surface of the lake.

Banff

Rocky Mountain Highlights
September 1 was a bright and crisp day in the Rocky Mountain town of Banff. Locals and visitors alike headed to Central Park to celebrate the province’s 100th birthday. The crowds enjoyed hot dogs and hamburgers, old-fashioned children’s games and great entertainment from local favourites and headliner Maren Ord. As the sun set, the evening sparkled with fireflies – a wonderful warm up to the stunning fireworks show that lit up the mountains later in the night.

Bonnyville

Come Together
It was a party of regional proportions in Bonnyville as about 8,000 residents of the town, the surrounding county and neighbouring Cold Lake and Glendon celebrated the province’s centennial together. The day’s events included free burgers and hotdogs, along with a sampling of local cultural flours. Entertainers from the area kept the crowd in good spirits with great music and more. A fantastic fireworks show was the perfect finale to a very memorable day.

A barbeque proved very popular at Banff’s AlbertaSpirit celebrations.

An appreciative crowd watches the fireworks display in Bonnyville.

Young Albertans share their provincial pride in Lethbridge.
Red Deer
Alta’s Party Central
Alberta’s centennial celebrations were ‘totally cool’ in Red Deer. Both hockey and figure skating were on the itinerary as Olympic gold medalists Jamie Salé and David Pelletier hosted an evening packed with central Alberta’s best entertainment. The action off the ice included singer Danny Hooper, local dancers and lots of fun activities for the kids. The fireworks were the perfect end to a perfect day that was enjoyed by thousands.

Fort McMurray
Hot Times up North
Fort McMurray celebrated Alberta’s 100th birthday and kicked off the city’s famous Blueberry Festival at the same time. The action at the city’s MacDonald Island Park included carnival rides and performances from local musicians and cultural dancers, and country music star Aaron Lines – a Fort McMurrarian.

Wainwright
Small Town, Huge Party
It all started with a really big cake — a cake so big that it took dozens of local residents to bake it and even more to eat it! Maybe it was just an icing-induced community-wide sugar rush, but it was definitely easy to have good times at AlbertaSpirit celebrations in Wainwright. The entertainment included local favourites and the headlining Corb Lund Band, who added their fun twist on Alberta’s country roots.

Medicine Hat
Past and Future Meet
With the Clay Industries National Historic District as a backdrop, Medicine Hat hosted a centennial party that would make any Albertan proud of their past and optimistic about their future. The celebrations included a line-up of local entertainers and a special presentation honouring the city’s Jubilee Baby, born on September 1st, 1955. The festivities were enjoyed by all.

Grande Prairie
A Grande Time had by all
Grande Prairie showed its AlbertaSpirit with a birthday carnival. There was dancing, singing, face painting, games, exhibits and plenty of cake in this lively community as Alberta turned 100. Hundreds of people flocked to Centre 2000 to rock with headliners Wide Mouth Mason and to watch the fireworks with their friends and neighbours.

Did you know...
The Australian capital of Canberra is using Alberta as a model for planning its 100th birthday celebrations in 2013.
How did you celebrate the centennial? Albertans certainly came up with some creative ways to mark their province’s 100th birthday. More than 1900 events and activities were posted on the centennial’s online calendar, and countless others came to our attention throughout the year. Albertans held concerts, family reunions, fairs and theatrical events. They created works of art, traveled the province and shared their culture. Here are just a few of the more unique ways Albertans made 2005 celebrations their own.

### 100 Ambassadors Shared the Spirit

You could have called them the celebration army. Alberta’s 100 plus Centennial Ambassadors worked tirelessly to get their communities into the centennial spirit and to help with local centennial events and activities. These volunteers went beyond the call of duty to help make the year a success.

### Ride the Range

850 riders saddled up for a five-day centennial ride back in time on the pristine prairies at Canadian Forces Base Suffield. An official commemorative book about the ride is also available. Call Captain Sterling Cripps at (403) 544-4405 for details.

### Paint a Picture

Over 250 visual artists, musicians, athletes, politicians and others painted 336 sections of a massive centennial mural entitled Buffalo Twins. The mural, now displayed in Lloydminster, celebrates both Alberta’s and Saskatchewan’s centennial.

### Get Lost

The Lacombe Corn Maze adopted a decidedly centennial theme in 2005. Visitors were challenged to find their way through Alberta’s coat of arms.

### Get Cooking

The ATCO Blue Flame Kitchen served up a new cookbook for the centennial. 100 Favorites — A Century of Cooking in Alberta is a compilation of some of the kitchen’s best-loved recipes.
Climb a Mountain
The Alberta Centennial Mountain Expedition marked the centennial by summiting 100 peaks in Alberta’s Rocky Mountains. Visit celebratealberta.com to learn more.

Recreate the Past
The Métis Nation of Alberta celebrated the province’s 100th birthday with the Métis Crossing Centennial Voyage Voyageurs Canoe Trip. The challenging three-day paddle down the North Saskatchewan starting in Edmonton ended at Métis Crossing.

Solve a Puzzle
Calgary Rogue Media Inc. created a fun way to get better acquainted with Alberta’s history, geography and culture—the company published Amazing Alberta—100 Word Puzzles About our Province.

Strike a Pose
The Yoga Association of Alberta marked the province’s 100th birthday by naming a yoga pose for each of the province’s emblems.

Plant a Garden
Communities in Bloom invited all Alberta communities to develop their own Alberta centennial heritage gardens using only heritage and native plants.

Share Some History
The United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) and ATCO both took the province’s history on the road. The UFA’s traveling History in Motion exhibit explored our agricultural heritage while ATCO’s Places in Time offered a look at Alberta’s past along with some fun family entertainment.

Celebrate Alberta Teams
Take Albertans Back in Time
Using only funny hats, a plywood time machine and raw dramatic talent, a group of high school thespians brought Alberta’s history to life at more than 40 different events across the province. The two Celebrate Alberta teams, one in the north and one in the south, performed historical skits, quizzed audiences and succeeded in sharing our past with a touch of humor.

Medallions for Students and Centenarians
To honour the contributions of its oldest citizens and acknowledge the promise of its youngest, Alberta issued two special centennial medallions in 2005. A 14-karat gold medallion was presented to Albertans 100 years or older and a special-edition brass centennial medallion was given to all students registered in kindergarten through grade 12 in Alberta schools. The Government of Alberta also presented gold medallions with special certificates to each Royal Canadian Legion and gave a silver version to visiting dignitaries.

Did you know...
The Honourable Lois E. Hole, Alberta’s previous Lieutenant Governor, was one of Alberta’s Centennial Ambassadors. Sadly, Her Honour passed away not long after 2005 began. A new provincial park, created as a centennial legacy, was named in her honour. The Lois Hole Centennial Provincial Park is located near St. Albert.
Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh were the guests of honour at a number of centennial celebrations during their three-day visit to the province in May 2005.

The visit began in the afternoon on May 23 with an official welcome to Alberta and centennial celebration at Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton. The rainy weather put a bit of a damper on the afternoon of Alberta entertainment, but a hardy crowd still managed a warm welcome.

The Queen spent the next day in Edmonton, beginning in the morning with a tour of the Provincial Museum of Alberta. The museum was renamed the Royal Alberta Museum in her honour. In the afternoon, The Queen visited the Legislature building to unveil a set of stained glass windows and address the Legislative Assembly. She also thrilled an adoring crowd during a walkabout on the Legislature grounds. The Duke of Edinburgh spent the day touring the oil sands in Fort McMurray.

On the morning of May 25, The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh were welcomed at Edmonton City Hall and completed a walkabout in Sir Winston Churchill Square, taking in musical entertainment and displays. They then departed for Calgary. The visit concluded with a spectacular City of Calgary centennial event at the Pengrowth Saddledome.

This was the Queen’s first visit to Alberta since 1990 and her fifth since becoming Queen in 1952.

**A Celebration Fit for the Queen**

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**Alberta’s Centennial Stamp**

It was easy to send a little centennial spirit to a friend in 2005: Canada Post issued a special stamp to celebrate Alberta’s 100th birthday. The stamp features ‘Tallpecs’, photos squeezed to give a hyper-vertical appearance. The images on the stamp are of a natural gas plant near Fort Saskatchewan, the Calgary skyline and Mount Lawrence Grassi looming over a CPR freight train.

**Alberta Artists Seen at Alberta Scene**

More than 600 Alberta artists had a chance to strut their stuff on the national stage as part of Alberta Scene, a 13-day festival of Alberta culture held in Ottawa in spring 2005. Venues across Canada’s capital showcased perennial favourites along with some of our province’s rising stars of theater, music, dance, film, literature and the culinary arts. Alberta Scene was hosted by the National Arts Centre with support from the Government of Alberta.

**Alberta’s Centennial Quarter**

The Royal Canadian Mint created a special circulation quarter commemorating Alberta’s centennial. The quarter’s design, featuring an oil derrick with cattle grazing at its base and an Alberta wild rose, was selected in the Mint’s first-ever public vote.

**Centennial Provinces Face-off in Hockey Challenge**

Our sister province of Saskatchewan also turned 100 in 2005: This shared milestone was marked with a little friendly competition between neighbours. The Centennial Challenge Cup, hosted by the CBC’s Ron MacLean, saw Western Hockey League players from the respective provinces go head-to-head in the border city of Lloydminster. Alberta won with a score of 7 to 5.
Albertans place a high premium on ingenuity, dedication, compassion and the willingness to lend a hand. The Alberta Centennial Medal was created as a special tribute to those who live these values every day.

Throughout 2005, about 8,000 medals were awarded to outstanding Albertans for achievements in a variety of fields. Representatives from provincial organizations, all levels of governments and other groups submitted nominations and were invited to present the medals to the recipients they had selected, resulting in many heartwarming local ceremonies recognizing Albertans from all walks of life.

The Alberta Centennial Medal also comes with a measure of prestige. It is included in the Canadian Order of Precedence of orders, decorations and medals and may be mounted and worn with other official honours.

Recognizing Excellence with Alberta’s Centennial Medal

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A tour bus filled with Alberta performers rolled into 10 communities during September and October as part of a special concert series presented by the Government of Alberta. Alberta Tracks: A Centennial Music Celebration brought together unique mixes of musical styles and artists. A total of 30 Alberta musicians and groups were showcased.

Many of the Alberta Tracks artists also took part in other centennial events including the Royal Visit and Alberta Spirit on September 1. The concert tour succeeded in bringing a taste of these celebrations out to rural Alberta.

Did you know...

Admission to all of Alberta’s provincial museums and historic sites and camping at all provincial parks was free on September 1.

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Alberta’s centennial was more than a celebration of our past. It was also a time to look forward and to build the lasting legacies that will be an asset to our province long after the birthday candles are blown out.

Years before the centennial was on the minds of most Albertans, the gears were already in motion to ensure that the province’s 100th birthday would be a success. When the Government of Alberta consulted with Albertans about the centennial, the message was loud and clear. Albertans, as practical as always, wanted their centennial to be more than a one-time celebration. They wanted a focus on projects that would be assets to their communities and a gift to future generations.

By 1999, the province was already investing in centennial legacy projects with the goal of having new public facilities open by 2005. By the end of the centennial, this investment had grown to over $500 million for 536 legacy projects in 400 communities across the province. The list of projects includes new recreation centres and cultural facilities, the renovation of the Northern and Southern Jubilee Auditoria, and the upcoming renewal of the Royal Alberta Museum. A portion of the total funding was also provided to all of Alberta’s incorporated municipalities as Alberta Centennial Per Capita Grants to be used to commemorate the centennial in any way the community saw fit.

Alberta’s centennial legacies, big and small, are making a difference in their communities providing new and better spaces for sports, the arts, and to preserve and share Alberta’s historical resources. Whether it’s a new library in Beaverlodge or an arena in Fort McMurray, Alberta’s 100th birthday has succeeded in giving a gift that keeps on giving.

Did you know...

Alberta’s centennial legacies are more than bricks and mortar. The province also invested in the future with new scholarships and an education savings plan.
Creating a Legacy for the Arts at the Art Gallery of Alberta

Alberta’s artists have always told the story of our province from unique perspectives and with amazing eloquence and passion. Providing space to share their works and inspire others is essential. That’s why the Government of Alberta announced a $15 million investment in the former Edmonton Art Gallery to create the Art Gallery of Alberta. This centennial legacy will create a provincial centre to nurture and showcase visual arts in our province.

Centennial Time Capsule

A mammoth steel time capsule embarked on a province-wide tour during Alberta’s centennial visiting 10 communities and making special stops at 13 schools. More than 200 communities were invited to add microcapsules filled with local mementos and memories to the 21-foot-long capsule. Albertans also had the opportunity to send personal messages into the future by signing the province’s birthday book. The book, along with community microcapsules, will be sealed in the time capsule and housed at the Royal Alberta Museum for the next 100 years.

Albertans Invite the World

During 2005, Albertans had the opportunity to have a personalized invitation to Alberta sent from the Premier to their friends and family. Over 30,000 invitations to join Alberta’s centennial celebrations were sent around the globe to 110 different countries including China, England and Saudi Arabia.

Alberta School History Project: If Walls Could Speak

Sixty-two schools across the province got into the spirit of the year by taking a look at their own histories. Students used words, video, music, pictures, art, dance, multimedia and lots of imagination to tell the stories of their schools. Thirty-nine projects were showcased on television, in newspapers and on the legislature grounds for the September 1 celebrations. All eligible schools received certificates and were entered in a draw for classroom electronics and other prizes.

Saluting Albertans Contributions to Sport and Recreation

The centennial was a great opportunity to recognize Albertans who are making a difference in their province. The Centennial Salute to Sport and Recreation was awarded to 100 people who had gone the extra mile to create quality opportunities for Albertans to participate in sport and recreation in their communities.

Hitting the Road with the Travel Alberta Card

The centennial was a great time to stay home for a holiday! Thousands of Albertans signed up for the Travel Alberta Holiday Card to receive special discounts and deals for travel within the province. Alberta’s hospitality industry offered a variety of centennial themed options for those wanting to get to know their province a little better.

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A Year in Images

1. Alberta’s centennial was front and centre at the 2005 Tim Hortons Brier.
2. The Alberta Centennial World Cup of Skiing was one of the last centennial events of the year.
3. The Queen greets friendly Corgis at the provincial legislature.
4. Centennial Ambassador James Stainton and his dog attend a soggy kick-off to Alberta’s centennial celebrations.
5. A centennial float ready for a parade in Brooks.
6. Ambassador Pauline Phibbs shows signs of the centennial in Fort Chipewyan.
7. Minister Gary Mar presents tickets to the Centennial Kick-off Party to military personnel and their families.
8. A centennial banner flies at the Medicine Hat Stampede.
9. GWL Realty Advisors’ Centennial project.
10. A young Albertan displays his centennial project.
12. September 1 fireworks in Calgary.
13. A restored Lougheed House is reopened. The house is a centennial legacy project.
15. k.d. lang performs at the AlbertaSpirit Gala on September 1.
16. Thousands participate in the re-enactment of Alberta’s Inauguration on September 1 at the Alberta Legislature.

More information...
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