

Ma Murray

By Michelle Montico

Margaret (Peg) Teresa Lally was born on August 3rd 1888 in Windy Ridge, Kansas., the seventh of nine children. Her ancestors were from County Cork, Ireland.

She left school at 13, but at age 17 she attended Business School in Fremont, Nebraska, she paid her tuition by working in the kitchen. After a year she got a job as a bookkeeper at Saddlery & Mercantile Co. in Kansas City. She and her co-workers dreamed of Alberta cowboys and they would slip notes into the saddles, eventually they started receiving postcards, letters and photos from 'Walrus Moustaches'!

Margaret travelled by steamship to Vancouver, Canada leaving her sister Beth 'Bess' in Seattle. She wrote to her sister from Vancouver saying 'And oh the trees! They're just like the men—big—they reach almost to heaven!'

Margaret met George Murray in 1912 and even though they had opposing religious and political views they got married on Ash Wednesday, February 5th 1913.

In 1914 Anmore was a land of stumps. And land was selling for \$5 per acre! In 1915 the road was put into loco.

Franklin John Lancaster, a part-time homesteader created the name Anmore as a mix of his wife Annie's name and his daughters name, Leonore in 1917 in order to secure water rights.

George and Margaret Murray purchased 300 acres between 1916 & 1920 and during that time they hosted lots of parties, their guests included writers, artists and poets who used 'bugs' which

were lamps made of jars or pails with holes in, that held candles to light their way. When hosting their stump clearing parties the Murray's would sometimes have a bagpiper walk around.

In the 1930's Buntzen Lake was providing power to Vancouver, Margaret Murray wondered 'Why not Anmore?' so she canvassed her neighbours and collected monies, bringing electricity to Anmore in the 1950's, the first thing the neighbours bought were household radios.

Georgina Keddell, the Murray's granddaughter wrote a book called 'the Newspapering Murray's in 1984. The Newspapering Murray's were regarded as 'a team to be reckoned with' and published The Chinook, The Bridge River-Lillooet News and the Alaska Highway News in Fort St. John. Margaret wrote articles on home survival skills for Country Life Magazine, including how to cure cotton with urine. The magazine was made famous by Margaret's saucy wit.

Margaret also appeared on a twice weekly, half an hour TV program on CBC. In 1971 Margaret Murray received the Order of Canada and also an Honourary Doctorate.

Margaret Murray was called variously 'The Rebel Queen of the North West', 'The Salty Scourge of Lillooet', 'the Crusty Queen of Publishing' and a 'Kansas Firecracker'!

Margaret Murray died in 1982 at age 94!

To check out more about Anmore's Heritage look at <http://www.anmorestories.blogspot.ca> or the Anmore Alternative News' Heritage section.