

Book #2 The Swedish Pioneers

I thought I wanted to use the same company I used before to have my WordPress blog content transformed into print. I set up the category of **“The Swedish Pioneers”** on their website months ago. Try as I may I could not get the post of **“Å jänta å ja”** to load into the print format. There were problems with the pictures as well. Although they were the right size in the blog they would show up miniature in the book.

I sent several emails to this company explaining the problems and they assured me time and time again that they had upgraded their software each time fixing the bugs. From mid October to mid November I went through the process over and over with limited success. However I wasn't comfortable sending the final result to the printer.

My search for “blog to print” printers became in earnest and so far I found none in Canada, one in the USA and a new site I found called

“BlookUp” in France. Although the book would not be exactly the same size, (slightly larger) their transforming my posts to page format was much easier.



Sample of a cover

In two weeks I had just the posts I wanted for the book. Although the posts were organized by the date I had published them I could easily put them in the order I wanted.

There isn't any place to accommodate the comments made on my posts but these can still be seen on the blog, 78mph.com.

I transferred my book for processing to BlookUp on December 4 and they were quick to email me regarding the cover. They wanted to know if I realized the picture of Mom and Dad's wedding party was not optimum quality. And they could not guarantee how the cover would look. However they said it is a wonderful picture. I said since it was 101 years old I wanted to have the picture on the cover. Period.

On December 6 the pre-book was sent to the printer and they estimated it would be 10-14 working days before I would receive the finished product. I was shocked to get an email from BlookUp on December 13. It had the tracking of DHL having shipped the books from France on their journey to "Southern Alberta Canada". All delivery estimates were for Monday December 18 but on December 15 at noon they had my parcel "On Delivery". I held my breath (not really) till 3:17 when I received a call that my delivery was in the condo complex. I ran down the stairs (no way – I took the elevator) and signed for my parcel.





, the cover looks good

I grabbed my scissors to cut the plastic packing tape and opened the box. Lifted the crumbled packing paper and there were the eight books. The front cover was in sight and **OH HOW HAPPY I WAS** to see that the picture of Mom and Dad and Paul and Beda was perfect!

The Swedish Pioneers

The Stone and Holmlund Families



Maureen O'Shea

blook^{LD}

finished product –
the cover: Paul, Beda, Dad (Peter) and Mom (Thea)

Thanks to **BlookUp** for the fast, efficient **blog to print**

experience.

My Dad's Family

My Dad's family

Me – Maureen O'Shea

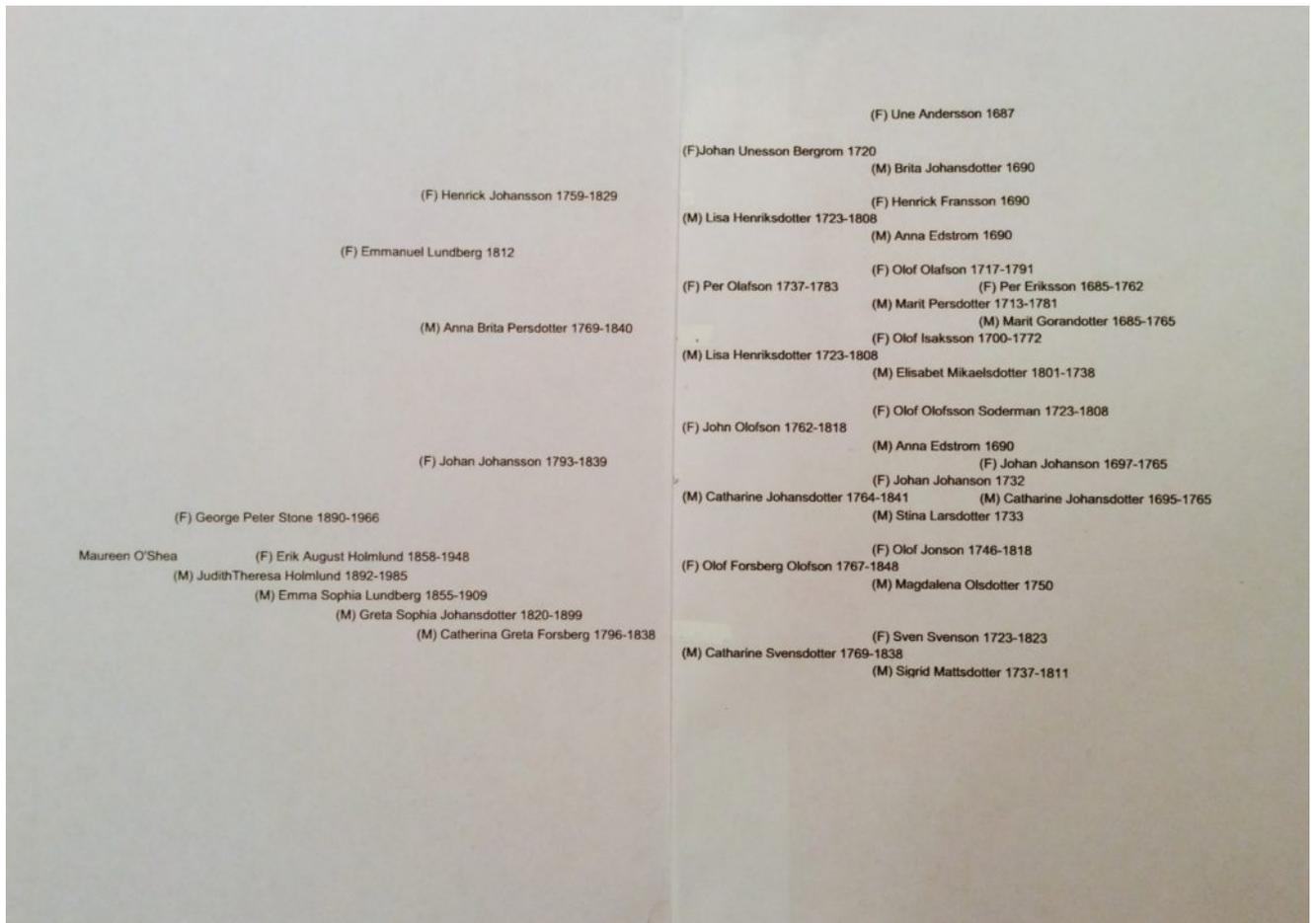
My Father George Peter Stone born Sten

His Mother Anna Elisabet Asberg 1851-1937. (M) Anna Cajsa
Aronfel 1828 (F) Eric Asberg 1824-1856

His Father Per Ersson Sten 1842-1907 (M) Kerstin
Jonsdotter 1818-1898 (F) Erik Persson Setterlund 1817-1890

My Mom's Family Tree

This is my Mom's Family Tree



Bill Loudon – Our Teacher in 1942

Guest post by my brother, Jim Stone

My grade four teacher, Bill Loudon, was years ahead of his time. He lived with his girlfriend, which in 2017 is not unusual, but in 1942 was simply unheard of. He played his guitar as a music class, taught us how to play chess, and told us many tales of adventures of his friend Buzz Hutchison and

himself in Gull Lake, Saskatchewan. He taught from August to December 1942 at [Stafford School](#).

I remember that we spent a lot of time practising for the Christmas Concert, and there was not much emphasis on actual schoolwork.

It is now 75 years later, and I'll try to remember some of the non-academic tales, in no particular order.

Russian Artillery Tactics

Louden told a story about Russian Artillery Tactics, which strained my credulity, even as a nine-year-old. The Russians were retreating from the Germans. As they retreated, they had taken a German soldier prisoner on a farm with a windmill. The Russians could train their guns on the farm but needed to know precisely when the Germans arrived. They tied the captive to one of the windmill blades and watched with field glasses for movement of the windmill. They reasoned that the Germans would rescue one of their own. When the blades moved, they blasted away.

Rock Fight with Buzz Hutchison

Bill and Buzz were having a rock fight. (This would work with snowballs, but it was summer.) They agreed that the fight was futile and one of them proposed a truce. Buzz said, "If you drop your rocks I'll drop mine." Bill did. Buzz didn't and let fly on the munitions-less Bill.

The Song which Amused Our Class the Most

"On a tree by the river
A little tom tit sang
willow tit
willow tit
willow.

I said to him
Dickey Bird
why do you sit
singing willow tit
willow tit
willow
Is it weakness of intellect?
Birdie I cried
or a rather tough worm
in your little inside?
With a shake of his poor little head he replied
tit willow tit
willow tit
willow.



Playing the guitar

Pitch Evaluation

Using the guitar and/or the piano, he endeavoured to determine the voice range of each of the students. I was proud when I learned he rated me a monotone!

Car Design

In 1942, most of the cars driven in our community were box-shaped models from the late 20's and early 30's. The Depression had limited the sale of more modern cars and the war effort had curtailed the production of vehicles for private use. Louden loved cars; he drew pictures on the blackboard of stream-lined vehicles which correctly forecasted the future.



Gotcha

Checkers

Louden decided that the school should have a checkers competition. I played Doreen Carlson in my first (and only) game. She won. How shameful. I was beaten by a girl!

Mosquitoes

For farm kids who faced mosquitoes every day in the summer, it was amusing to see Bill Loudon arrive at school with a mosquito net draped over his hat – with his pipe protruding from a hole therein. There was such a clamour that he only wore it once.

Bugger

My cousin Mickey made the mistake of calling Bill Louden a “bugger”. Mr. Louden made him look up that word in the dictionary. We learned something new that day.

Memory Gems

Louden thought it would be a good idea if the pupils memorized a poem of their choosing and recited it before the class. This practise continued for a brief period until my cousin Garry recited as follows:

”Snow on the mountain
slippery as glass
down came a Billy Goat
sliding on his
(pause)... overcoat.”

Comfort Women

In 1942 , Korea had been occupied by Japan for several years. The Japanese army forced many Korean women into sex slavery. Sexually transmitted diseases were rampant. Louden implied that the women involved deliberately infected themselves in order to infect the Japanese troops. At nine years, old, I had no idea what he was talking about.

Hernia

Louden claimed that you could get a hernia by lifting a small object, such as a ball of twine (for a binder). This amused the audience, especially the farm boys.

Stafford – Our One Room Schoolhouse



first school was at this sit

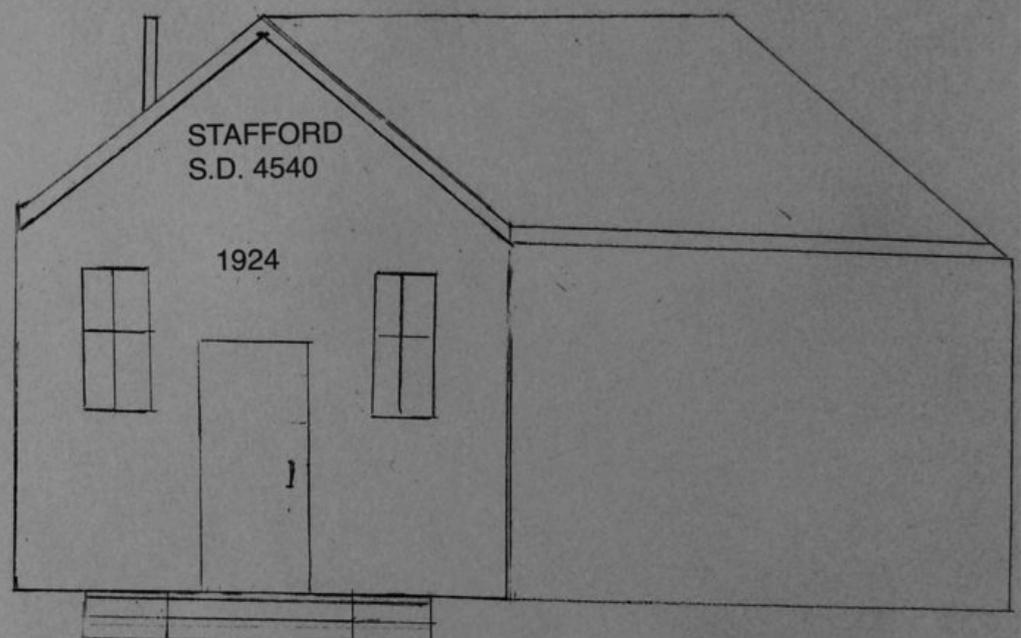
If any of you have watched [Anne](#), the CBC television series based on L.M. Montgomery's Anne of Green Gables series of books, you'd know the heroine, Anne Shirley Cuthbert, attended school in a one-room schoolhouse. I, too, attended a one-room schoolhouse and for those of you who have no idea what it was like, or those who'd like to take a little walk down memory lane to their formative years, let me tell you about Stafford,

our one room schoolhouse, in School District #4540, Strongfield, Saskatchewan.

Stafford had students from Grade One through Grade Eight. Although students in Grade 9 and 10 could come and use a desk to work on their correspondence classes sent to them from the Department of Education, Correspondence Division, the teachers weren't qualified to help the high-schoolers.

I started school when I was six years old and although I was very excited to be starting school, I had visited it on several occasions before I did – like when the annual Christmas Concerts were held. As previously noted here when I was five years old, I made a guest performer, reciting all 27 verses of ["T'was The Night Before Christmas"](#).

Ppiuû

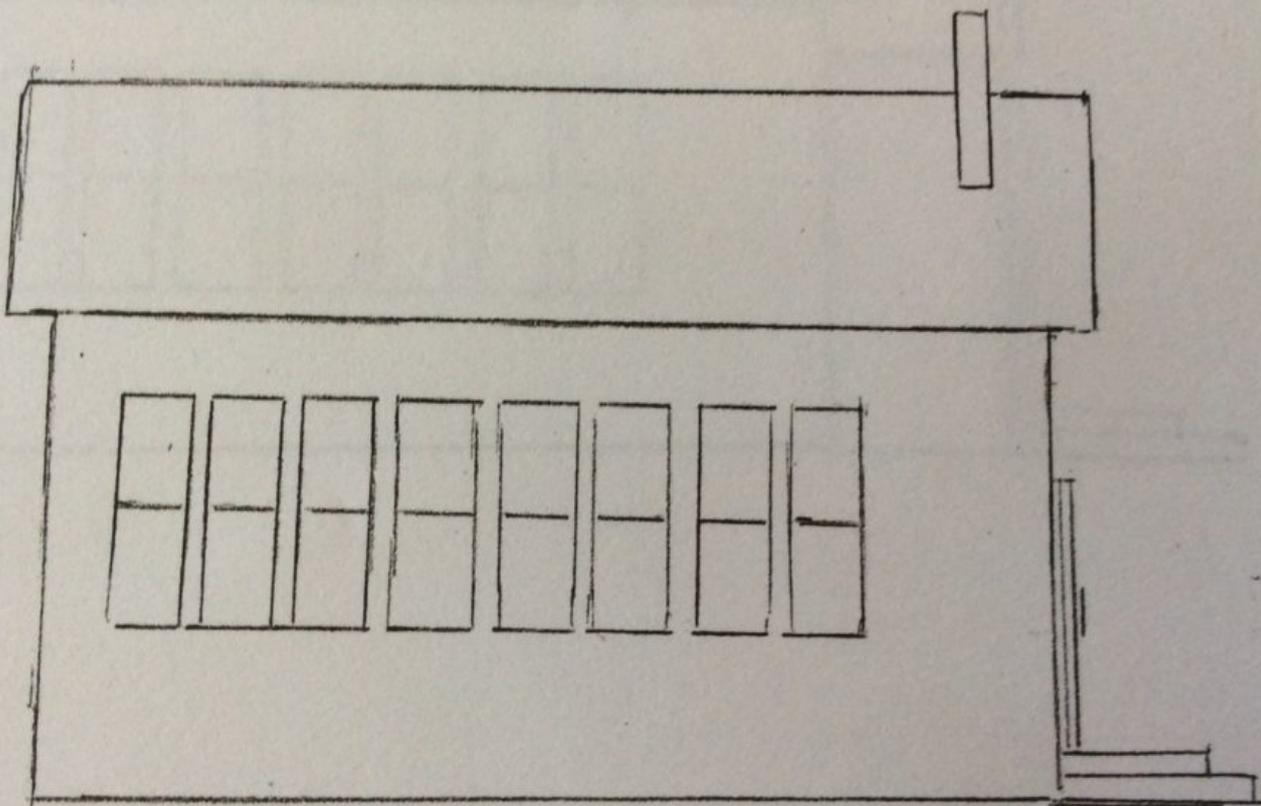


drawing of the Stafford School house

The building itself was quite large. It was, perhaps, one of the largest schoolhouses in the area. It may have been built as large as it was because there were many children in the area at that time. If I think hard enough, I can still see in my mind's eye what the what the front of the school looks like

I remember the smell of freshly waxed floors at the school when classes started in the fall. In the wintertime you could smell the burning coal from the coal-fired furnace.

I was unable to locate any pictures of our school so these are my drawings. Not perfect, of course, but this is how I think it looked



drawing of the side view of Stafford School

Fall was a wonderful time to be at school. My family and cousins were baseball fans and many of us could come down with a mysterious flu bug when the World Series was being played in October. We had a two-acres schoolyard with plenty of space for the softball long hitters. What we lacked in equipment we easily made up in enthusiasm for the game.



Not our school yard but you get the picture

We played ball during both recesses and lunch hour. Of course the stronger boys could out-hit the rest of us (but if I got on base I certainly could run FAST!)

My brother Jim recently sent me a letter, recounting one of his early jobs, keeping Stafford school warm in the winter. "From age 12 on," he writes, "I took my turns as a fireman. I earned 20¢/day. Of course the school was empty over the weekend and often the temperature in the winter could be as cold as -30C so it was awfully cold on Monday mornings!

Jim added these items:

"There was a crawl space under the school room. Once one of our neighbours from the Wheat Plains district bought a new car and was proudly driving by, windows open to savour the fresh air, when a posse of urchins (aka students) picked up handfuls of dirt and pitched them in through the open windows. The driver made a three-point turn, the posse took off and took refuge in the crawl space. We could hear muffled voices, apparently complaints to the teacher, but nothing came of it. The neighbour getting the dust shower was Lars Grunerud. He was rumoured to be dating our teacher, Grace Gifford. I got in trouble by writing on the blackboard – Grace and Lars."



This outhouse is similar to the one we had at Stafford School

As with most schoolhouses of the time we had an outhouse. It was at the far east end of the school yard and in the winter months you really had to make a run for it! It was used ONLY for the girls – the boys had to use the barn! It was always clean and had the most unique toilet paper holder.

The interior of the schoolhouse. The light for the school came from the north side of the building and there were about eight windows on that side. Along the west side of the classroom was cupboards, top and bottom. These cupboards were made of wood, possibly elm, and were a light brown colour. The upper cabinets housed our library, which contained thick, heavy books – books too thick and heavy to get me interested in them. Hidden from sight and stored way up high probably added to them being incredibly uninviting to read. I can't remember ever getting books from the library for reference and I know I never took a book home to read.

O
u
r
d
e
s
k
s
w
e
r
e
l
i
k
e



the ones in the featured image. We actually had room in our desks for all our scribblers relating to each subject we were taking. We would never have to worry about a scribbler or pencil going missing: we had an honour system and nobody touched the contents of someone else's desk. We never, ever, took our scribblers home – or even had HOMEWORK. Nobody had such a thing as a back pack all you carried to school and home was your lunch pail. I'm pretty sure empty Roger's Golden Syrup tins with the handles on it was what we used! Our lunch pails held our sandwiches and usually an apple. I remember having sliced radishes, cucumbers or tomatoes (even sliced dill pickles) in my sandwiches. Sometimes baloney, canned salmon and even peanut butter and jam! How tasty that, first ripe tomato from our garden in the fall, tasted in my sandwich. We had a large swing set at the school and when the weather was nice we girls often sat on the swings to eat our lunch.

I can't remember any student that had to repeat a grade.

My teachers were my sister [Verna Stone](#), Bill Loudon, Edith

Skelton, Helen Bakke, my cousin Glenna Stone, Jeanne Hundebly and Beatrice (Bea) Siefert. We had good teachers (with the exception of Bill Loudon) and with 20 or more students from Grades 1-8, it must have been quite a challenge for them! It wasn't easy to get teachers as our school was 14 miles from any town. We had no roads that were passable for cars/trucks in the winter months and we were past the stage of horses and sleighs. Being stuck out there in the winter would have been very lonely: it wasn't any wonder most teachers didn't stay for more than one year.

[My brother Gerald](#) (who was 23 at the time) told me that Bea Siefert wouldn't let him kiss her because she thought that's how you got pregnant. Going back to Anne, there was an episode where she pretty much told the girls at school the same thing.

Prose and Verse

One of Gerald's favourite stories was when one of the teachers announced the school was getting a new book – The Canada Book of Prose and Verse. He heard the title as The Canada Book of Frozen Birds! For the life of him, he couldn't understand why anyone would want to read about *frozen birds*.

I loved going to school and was good at it. Since I skipped Grade Two I was alone in my grade until the McIntosh family moved into the area and Maxine was with me in Grades Six to Eight. It was most interesting listening to the teaching of the grades ahead of you, when you knew you would be taking those classes the next year. And also you had a feeling of smugness when the teacher was teaching the grades below your grade, after all, you already knew that stuff! (Like long division!)

Discipline was not a problem at our school. I suppose there was a bit of "testing" what the students could get away with the start of a new teacher – but that never lasted long and we knew the teacher was the boss. As a rule, we were well

behaved; giggling and passing notes to friend or foe was about the limits of bad behaviour. Sometimes a student had to stand facing the corner at the front of the room for a time out!

Not only did our teacher have a bell on his or her desk for calling us in for class but one ring of the bell could certainly quiet the room.



strap – I saw it on the desk once but never saw it used.

In the bottom drawer of her desk was also a leather strap and just the threat of it being used was enough to stop any incident from getting out of hand.

Spring was the most exciting time for our students would enter into competition with the other schools in the district for a Track and Field Meet. Our school had a history of not only participating but winning red ribbons (first prize) and this had to be upheld by the current student body. We had the ball

diamond to practice racing and pits for high jump etc. My family had similar facilities at home and this along with good genes made for competitive athletes to represent our school. We spent a lot of time outside the school practicing for this annual event. Most of our school work was done by May and the teachers were happy to have us out of the school room. The meet for the Outlook School Unit was held in one of the hamlets in our area: Glenside, Hawarden, Strongfield, Loreburn or Elbow. Perhaps a hundred kids from Grade 1 to Grade 12 were competing. I was so excited I can feel the adrenaline rush even to this day of my first track and field meet. My Mom had seen me a new outfit to wear: black shorts and a red top and with my clean, new running shoes I felt super special. See "[My early years](#)" post. Often our school won a the prize for the best results of the number of students participating.

The school had a piano and when my sister Verna taught us for one full year and one half year, we would sing songs every Friday afternoon. We had debates, spelling bees and geography matches involving the entire student body. Sometimes we were allowed to take names from the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool map that had all the towns, hamlets and even sidings that had a Pool elevator in the Province.

Bill Loudon was something else when it came to being a teacher. HE was at our school the fall of 1942. (If our parents had known how little academic work we were doing he most likely would not have lasted a month. But nobody would tell as we were having a blast!)

My brother Jim will tell you ALL about Bill Loudon. Hang onto your hats these stories are in the next posting.