



COALHURST CENTENNIAL – HONOURING OUR PAST AND CELEBRATING OUR FUTURE

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS A HUGE SUCCESS!!!

Did you know!!!!!! Family Day exceeded all our expectations. Over 300 people attended the event (well that's when we stopped counting). 31 Volunteers (19 youth, 3 seniors and 9 adults) provided over 155 hours of service for the day! Many thanks to those who participated, volunteered, shared their talents, loaned their equipment, set up and cleaned up! The Coalhurst High School who provided a great many of the volunteers and to the two young women (Carlene and Kyla) who have been active participants on the Centennial Committee – we thank you. The **Centennial Committee** is made up of a number of citizens from Coalhurst and represents a cross section of those who reside in our town. From seniors to business people, Town Council, students and schools we have a great committee. Many thanks to our members, who have worked tirelessly on our events and activities! A big thank you to the Coalhurst 55 Plus Society for their support in overseeing the funds raised and for being wonderful!

Firedamp: The Story of the Coalhurst Mine Disaster

The three-act stage play *Firedamp*, the story of the Coalhurst mine disaster of 1935, is being re-staged by **Coalhurst High School, with support from the Nord-bridge Seniors Centre of Lethbridge, in partnership with the Coalhurst Centennial Committee**. Written by teacher, Arlene Purcell, and with an all-student cast, the drama was first staged in 1998, and the story of the play's production and of its significance to the history and culture of the Lethbridge region was published in an article in *Alberta Views* in the spring of 1999. In response to repeated requests over the years the play is being brought back to audiences to coincide with the Coalhurst Centennial celebrations.

Firedamp depicts the events of the mid-1930's in the town of Coalhurst, Alberta, where Lethbridge Collieries operated the Imperial Mine at which an underground methane gas (firedamp) explosion occurred killing sixteen men on December 9, 1935. The sixteen men left behind eleven widows and forty-two offspring. The funeral was, to this day, the largest ever held in Lethbridge, and the City's Mayor Elton requested that all Lethbridge businesses close their doors on that day out of respect for the deceased miners. The Coalhurst Mine Disaster was a major tragedy in the Lethbridge area during the tumultuous and challenging times of the Great Depression.

Produced and directed by Coalhurst High School teachers, Arlene Purcell and Diane Pommen, the cast is made up of twenty-two enthusiastic and committed students from Coalhurst and Lethbridge schools. Crew members include students, teachers, parents, and community members from Coalhurst and Lethbridge. By the time it is performed in the last week of May, well over a hundred people, organizations, and businesses from the area will have been involved in bringing this project to audiences.

By early April, a website devoted to the play and to the history of the Coalhurst Mine Disaster will be up and running and will be called **Firedamp**; advertising will be in full swing. In the meantime, you can connect to Firedamp by liking us and by commenting on the Facebook page **Firedamp 2013**.



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MORE TO CELEBRATE . . . JUST PICTURE IT!

Coalhurst High School continues to celebrate the Centennial with its own “**Dance of the Decades**” set for early spring 2013. They are also ready to show case their mascot at the **Centennial Week and Homecoming (Miner’s Days) Parade** in August. Watch for details!

Coalhurst Elementary School: Centennial Spring Concert is set for **April 25**. The children are busy getting ready. Come and support what should prove to be a highlight of the centennial!

Canada Day Celebration Coalhurst Style! Paint the Town Red! Activities start in the afternoon, fun and games for kids of all ages, try your hand at Canadian Street Hockey, block party, best decorated house and so much more! Interested in volunteering – call Kim Horak. Messages can be left at the Town Office at 403-381-3033.

Firedamp: The Story of the Coalhurst Mine Disaster. The three-act stage play *Firedamp*, the story of the Coalhurst mine disaster of 1935, is being re-staged by Coalhurst High School, with support from the Nord-bridge Seniors Centre of Lethbridge, in partnership with the Coalhurst Centennial Committee. Written by teacher, Arlene Purcell, and first performed in 1998 is being resurrected for the centennial. Performances **Saturday May 25, to Saturday, June 1** at the **Sterndale Bennett Theatre** in Lethbridge. Tickets are \$15.00 each and available in mid-April through the Yates ticket office.

Coalhurst Centennial Celebration and Homecoming (Miners Days) August 8-11, 2013. Parade, entertainment, dinner and dance, Old Time Outdoor Sunday Service, Family Picnic

December 17, 2013 – Coalhurst 100th Birthday – watch for details!!!!

Great appreciation is extended to our **Coalhurst Centennial Sponsors:**

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