

KATE & HAVILAND BULFORD

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Crib tournament

Spirit River contestants at the South Peace Cribbage Tournament in Grande Prairie on the weekend took the highest average of points among the 98 who came from Spirit River, Grande Prairie, Beaverlodge, Dawson Creek, Hythe and Fairview. Shown left to right are: Oscar Wikner of Dawson Creek, **Kate Bulford** of Grande Prairie, Lavina Wiker of Dawson Creek and Bessie Burgess of Grande Prairie.

The Daily Herald-Tribune

[Grande Prairie, Alberta, Canada • Wed, Apr 30, 1980](#)Page 34

'I just keep going, day to day'

Kate Bulford: Time goes fast when you're busy

By MICHAEL LAU
Herald-Tribune staff

You might say **Kate Bulford** is a remarkable woman. For a number of reasons.

Maybe it's because she's lived in and around Grande Prairie since 1917. Or because she's the mother of two sets of twins.

It also may have something to do with the number of grandchildren she has, 25, or the number of great-grandchildren, 43.

But the most likely reason is that she's 90-years-young.

What impression does **Kate** have of her long life?

"Time goes awful fast when you're busy," she said. "I just keep going, from day to day."

Still, **Kate** will be the first to tell you, it may have been fast but not always smooth.

"We went through the hard times," she said of the 1930s. "It's so much better now. I don't know what this generation would do if they had to live through those years."

"There was no family allowance, no pensions and everyone had to make their own living."

She said farm families like her own were forced to sell whatever they managed to raise.

"But for a while, what we raised wasn't worth anything."

"A 200-pound pig would sell for \$2 and 80 bushels of grain for \$13. After you paid your thrashing and twine bills, there wasn't much left."

Kate said although the period was called the Hungry Thirties, they had plenty of food.

"We were never hungry. We had meat and vegetables, flour, bread, porridge, milk, sugar, tea and coffee."

"But we had no money to buy clothes. I had to knit and sew."

Ironically, some of **Kate's** fondest memories also come from that decade.

"We used to go blueberrying with several other families at Brookbanks. It was our picnic."

"It was a lovely place. There was a spring close by and sometimes we'd stay overnight, sleeping under the stars."

"The boys would climb trees and carve their initials in them."

When World War II started, conditions improved, **Kate** said.

"It seems it takes a war to bring prices up."

Kate was born in Austria in 1896. At age seven, her family moved to Canada and homesteaded near Jansen, Sask.

She married her late husband Haviland in 1915 and two years later, moved to this area together.

"There wasn't much Grande Prairie in '17," she recalled. "In 1920, Richmond Ave. was just one big mud hole. It was the winter of the big snow and it melted."

Water covered the road and poured into Bear Creek from a lumber yard located around where the bypass is today.

She gave birth to her first child, Irene, in 1920. Twins, Harvey and Harry, were born in 1924 and two years later, the second twins, Elmer and Eleanor arrived.

It was a time of mobility for the family, as they went from place to place before finally settling down for good near Bezanson, in 1929.



KATE BULFORD

...times are a whole lot better now

Understandably, raising her five children was a full-time job for **Kate**.

"I didn't have time to spoil them, because I was so busy."

After the Depression came the more pleasant 1940s, when the farm steadily became modernized.

In the '50s, **Kate** had something else vying for her time, grandchildren.

Four years after her husband passed away, in 1963, **Kate** moved to a house in town.

Nowadays, **Kate** lives at the Heritage Lodge where she spends most of her time doing her favorite hobby, tatting. She also enjoys watching sports on television and playing cards with friends.

Kate said the world has changed a great deal since she was a child.

"There's so much money now. When I was growing up, there wasn't any. And people are so independent."

"It's a nice change. I hope people never have to go back to what we went through."



Blueberry-picking picnic in the Brookbanks district ...an outing back in 1927-28



Haviland and Kate Bulford
...tough times together

Grande Spirit Foundation awards

The Grande Spirit Foundation, which operates senior citizen residences in the region, recently recognized residents of Heritage Lodge, Wild Rose Manor and Pioneer Lodge with 3-, 5, 10- and 15-year residency lapel pins.

Heritage Lodge



5-year pins: (left to right) Kate Bulford, Sylvia Ladwig, Wauneita Ogden, Minna Toerper, Myrtle Jordan, Gladys Carveth, Jennie McDonald, Ragnhild Rorem, Edna Ungstad, Sam Yakimuk, Theresa Moessner, Gertrude Nagel. Missing: John Kildal, Yukola Kildal.