

# ELSIE & WALTER ROBERTSON

Mentions in [The Daily Herald-Tribune](#), Grande Prairie, Alberta, Canada

# Swans weather cold snap okay

CLAIRMONT (Staff) - Grande Prairie's hybrid Trumpeter swans, spending the winter on the Walter Robertson farm at Clairmont, haven't been troubled one bit by the current cold spell.

The swans - crosses between the regular Trumpeter and the European whooping swan - were placed on the farm last fall by the city fire department, which is responsible for them.

The move was made because of improper facilities at the Bear Lake reservoir where the birds spend the summer months as a tourist attraction.

Mrs. Robertson said yesterday the two glossy white birds haven't gone off their feed and are doing "real good."

"They've got their pen and their little house where they go at night," she said, "and they're eating their oats, oyster shells, lettuce and bread, which they'll take from my hand."

"It's been a real pleasure caring for them. They're no trouble at all."



Mrs. Elsie Robertson of Sexsmith feeds fire department's pair of swans

## She'll hate to see this pair go

By BOB DURRANT  
of our staff

SEXSMITH — "I'm really going to hate to see these buggars go," Mrs. Elsie Robertson said, as she watched Mother duck and her five ducklings in the green carpet of spring and knew that she will soon be losing her winter long pets.

Mrs. Robertson has been the chief cook and bottle washer for the Grande Prairie fire department's 2 hybrid Trumpeter swans since October of last year and has had many an exciting moment with them.

"They haven't really changed my routine day to day this year," she said, "and the extra work involved didn't seem to be very much, but I really enjoyed having them here looking after them."

Mrs. Robertson volunteered for the job of wintering the swans when she was told last fall that the fire department was unable to find a suitable location for them and that they would be shipped south for the winter.

"They are our swans and they should stay here," she said, adding back over the winter, Mrs. Robertson has many memories. "Soon after she took the 2 swans the fish and wildlife department of the Alberta government asked her to take another one temporarily until they could find a home where else for it.

A new swan turned out to be a wild one who had an injured wing and was unable to fly.

"I thought that it would die but it took right to the other end and seemed to come around," she said, "I think that it will live somewhere down south."

Mrs. Robertson had the swans for about 4 days and during that time cared for it like it was a sick child. It's now had a badly amputated and it was highly unlikely that it would fly again.

The swans were raised in an area about 25 feet square and

had a small wooden house in the centre of it to protect them against the cold. Clean straw was spread on the ground and in the house several times a day and a tub of water was kept in the pen in order that they could clean themselves frequently during the day.

"The swans really liked the cold winter," she said, "I usually had to shoo them into their house and close a gate on them because I was afraid that they might catch cold, especially when it went down to 59 below zero."

Mrs. Robertson changed the water several times a day in their bath tub but other than that there was no heat anywhere in their pen.

The swans got to know Mr. and Mrs. Robertson and now will eat food from out of their hand or let them pet them inside the pen. They are still wary of strangers, however, and won't allow anyone else to get very close.

The only time they escaped was about 3 weeks ago when the gate to the pen was left open accidentally by a veterinarian who had gone out to check on the birds. The Robertson quickly noticed that one bird was out but in the process of catching it the other one escaped.

A neighbor's dog was brought into the search and soon had the swan and held it until Mr. Robertson had it in hand. The other bird remained out all night and finally Gay Ireland and his dog were called in to help. The dog flushed him out of the bush and it wasn't long before he was back in the pen.

"The swans just won't have anything to do with my husband now," Mrs. Robertson said jokingly. "I guess they don't like to be sat on."

The pen is scheduled to be moved to the Fishery Campsite on the by-pass north of the city as a tourist attraction this summer.

The idea of housing the swans in the area was to promote Grande Prairie as a breeding station.

## *McBean - Robertson*

Mrs. Lillian McBean of Grande Prairie (formerly of Eaglesham) is pleased to announce the engagement of her daughter Ida-Marie, to Mr. David Robert Robertson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Robertson of Grande Prairie. A spring wedding is planned.

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## wedding bells

*Robertson - McBean*



**Mr. and Mrs. Dave Robertson (nee: Ida McBean) - Panda Camera photo.**

A double-ring marriage ceremony was solemnized in St. Joseph's Roman Catholic church in Grande Prairie Sept. 1 at 2 p.m., uniting in marriage Ida Marie McBean and David Robertson.

Father McNally officiated.

The bride, the daughter of Mrs. Lillian McBean and the late Peter McBean, was given in marriage by her uncle Morris Burroughs of Eaglesham. The groom is the son of **Mr. and Mrs. Walter Robertson** of Grande Prairie.

The attendants for the wedding were Georgie and Alwyn McBean, sister and brother of the bride and Jim and Maxine Robertson, brother and sister-in-law of the groom. Doreen Rigler was flower girl and Michael Anderson, nephew of the bride, acted as ring-bearer.

Carol Rigler was organist and Michael and Sherry sang during the signing of the register.

A reception and dance was held in the Eaglesham Hall following the ceremony.

The couple will reside in High River where the groom is employed with the Fish and Wildlife division.



Staff photo by Jeff Harris

**SENIOR ATHLETES** — **Walter Robertson** of Grande Prairie lets fly with a lawn bowling ball during yesterday's practice session at Avondale playground. Mr. Robertson is one of 18 city senior citizens who, along with 12 others from the Peace Country, will represent the Peace in lawn bowling at the Alberta Summer Games in Red Deer at the end of August.