

ED & MABEL BREDESON

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

12 Cards of Thanks

OLDTIMERS — The Program Committee of the Grande Prairie and District Old Timer's Association would like to express their sincere thanks to the following fiddlers and those who accompanied them for providing such enjoyable entertainment for those who attended our annual banquet. Gerald Bozarth, Ed Bredeson, Bill Hannas, May Head, Fred Mason, Arvid Moe, Clarence Sjerdal, Victor Ukrainetz and Andy Waldner.

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Triple celebration

Married within eight weeks...



Mr. and Mrs. Gehard Berg



Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Bredeson



Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Bredeson

Gehard Berg and his sisters Margaret and Mabel all were married within eight weeks of each other — 59 years ago.

The three, with their spouses and immediate families gathered for a very special joint wedding anniversary celebration, April 18 at Aurora Court in Grande Prairie.

Reminiscing over cake and coffee, each had his or her own story to tell.

Margaret married Alfred Bredeson, March 22, 1927, with Minnie Nelson and Elmer Johnson as attendants. Travelling home to Sexsmith after the ceremony, they were met with a shower of rice as they disembarked the train.

Their first home was a small house north of Sexsmith, while Alfred worked for a short time on the railway. In 1928 they filed on a homestead in the Glen Leslie district, where they lived since, raising five children who have given them 16 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren.

Margaret played guitar and Alfred, violin, and once when returning home from playing at a dance, they found their home gutted by fire.

REBUILT

Before long, though, they had rebuilt and Margaret's beautiful flowers and plants and crocheted items once more decorated their home. Her garden and yard always showed the great pride she had in her work.

Alfred loved the outdoors. He was long a great hunter and trapper, fisherman and boatsman, often just enjoying nature and the quiet of the wilderness.

Gehard Berg chose a beautiful spring day, May 9, 1927 in Saskatoon, Sask., to make Tilla Ask his bride.

They journeyed by train to a farm near Meacham where Gehard worked as a farm helper. He later raised chickens and sold eggs and always enjoyed sports — skiing, playing and coaching baseball, and curling. Even today he can show off his trophies for some of these.

Tilla's spare moments were occupied with crocheting, tatting and sewing.

One fall day in 1940 as Gehard was finishing helping his neighbors around Viscount (south central Saskatchewan) with the threshing, he announced "Alberta is calling" — he and Tilla and their three children sold the livestock, bought a 1928 Chevy, loaded up all their worldly possessions, and headed for "the great Alberta."

Three days later they arrived, were reunited with their families and Gehard began farm work again, with the threshing here.

He also helped earn a living for his family by playing fiddle with a dance band. Their evenings often passed with games of Norwegian whist and other card games.

UNTIL RETIREMENT

They settled on their own farmland near Bezanson soon after, brushing it by hand and building a home, farming and logging until they retired. They've enjoyed many trips together over the years, camping or travelling by bus.

Their three children have given them nine grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

Mabel was the last of the three Bergs to tie the knot, marrying Edwin Bredeson May 19, 1927.

They worked at a sawmill north of Buffalo Lakes for the first couple of years together, then moved to the Glen Leslie district to begin farming.

Their house was never large but always had room for one more. Many Sundays saw family and friends join the Bredesons for ballgames, horseshoes and a table full of food for all.

Mabel never seemed to tire of cooking and specialized in decorating many beautiful wedding cakes.

Always interested in music, Edwin played violin and Mabel played piano with a dance band for years.

Ed was also a wilderness lover, enjoying hunting, trapping and fishing. Camping and fishing still occupy a lot of the couple's time today and they often take the holiday trailer and boat up to Sturgeon Lake.

Both are healthy and active, living on the farm where they raised their three children. They have 12 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.



Bezanson Golden Years opening was a come-back of sorts for veteran fiddler Ed Bredeson.

Bredeson band brought back some warm old memories

By MARY-ANNE THURBER
Herald-Tribune staff

As the band starts to play, a light of recognition begins to appear in the audience's eyes. And as they clap their hands in rhythm, it's evident by the far-away looks on their faces that they're thinking of a time long past.

Comments like "Oh that takes me back" are murmured as the Ed Bredeson band plays a selection of favorites that have made them beloved by the people of Bezanson and the surrounding area.

Ed, his wife Mabel and son Ernie were giving a performance at last week's opening ceremonies for the Bezanson Golden Years Centre and the engagement was a come-back of sorts.

Ed played at the first dance after the first Bezanson town hall was built in 1923, and now, 66 years later, it seems only fitting that the Bredesons should return and inaugurate the new senior's centre.

The only difference between this grand opening and the one in 1923, says Ed, is that when the first town hall dance was held the building wasn't completed - he remembers playing his fiddle in the middle of the hall with its open floor and log walls that were only three feet high.

Ed started playing the fiddle in Minnesota. He basically taught himself, but when he took it up he could only play with three fingers. The hired man on his parents' farm later taught him to play with four.

After the family moved to Bezanson in 1915, when Ed was 12, he began playing his fiddle for dances and community events around the area.

Later he met his wife Mabel, who plays the guitar and piano, and soon the two were travelling around with other musicians playing dances for about \$2 a night, about three times a week. Ed farmed and trapped for a living at the time.

As their children grew, they would follow the couple and

their band as it travelled around entertaining local residents. Ernie says he remembers many a time falling asleep on benches during the dances.

Music was a big part of Ed and Mabel Bredeson's life, a love they handed down to their children.

Ed said neither he nor his children know how to read music, learning new songs simply by listening. "We'd just hear it once and we could remember it," he says.

When he was 14, Ernie began playing with the band and the three continued playing together casually until the trio finally retired in 1960.

Ed says he still remembers how much fun the dances were and how everyone enjoyed getting together from miles around.

"In the old dances everyone danced with everyone else, you brought your wife but you never did stay with her."

He said he and his band always tried to stay current and learn the modern music, sometimes in strange ways.

At one dance two American visitors asked the band to play the butterfly dance. That particular selection was unfamiliar to the Bredesons, but they had the men hum the song and learned to play it from that. Once they got the tune right, the two young men ran out on the dance floor and proceeded to teach the townspeople how to do the butterfly.

Although the Bredeson band no longer plays for audiences, music has not left the family, as several of their grandchildren are also musicians and members of bands around the country.

"They're a lot better than we were," laughs Ernie.

The concert at the senior's centre and a performance two years ago at their own 60th wedding anniversary are the extent of the performances the Bredesons give now, but they say they still have fond memories of their past performances.

"We had a good time and people were nice to us," said Ed.

Oldtimers honored



The Golden Years Club of Bezanson recently honored area residents who are 80 years of age and older. Over 55 friends and club members gathered to salute the seniors. The people being honored included Frank Kochalyk (back left), Max Franks, Wladymir Kochalyk, Art Rees, Art Patterson, Ellis Turner, Ed Bredeson, Annie Gresco and Stan Fenton (front left), Cora Franks, Elsie Ames, Hazel Weegar, Edna Ames, Tilla Berg and Mabel Bredeson.

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Senior celebration



The Bezanson Golden Years Club celebrated Seniors Week with a supper and social evening — with music by Ernie Bredeson, Andy Waldner and Marion Waldner and singing by Mabel Bredeson, John Stark and Phyllis Stewart — for the 80-year and over members. Those taking part included Francis Goodland (front left), Hazel Weegar, Art Rees, Maggie Robideau, Willie Munro, Ed Bredeson, Mabel Bredeson and Annie Oe (back left), Peggy Robideau, Claire Irvine, Mildred McPhee, John Stark, Myrtle Fenton, Art Patterson, Edna Anderson, Elsie Ames, Ellis Turner, Billie Ford and Fred Ford.