

# ***Historical Overview of Olds Agricultural Society (OAS)***

## ***Important Dates in History***

- 1894 First Fair in Olds  
*Fifteen years after the first Fair in Edmonton and eight years after the inaugural Fair in Calgary.*
- December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1899 Inaugural Meeting of Olds Agricultural Society  
O. S. Moore elected as Secretary  
Membership fees were \$2, eighteen members  
*Subsequent executive members reads as a “whos who” of Olds and area citizens – Fred Shackleton, Adoniram (A. J.) Samis, Louis & Jean Latimer, Neil Leatherdale, Arvin Bull, Ian Harvie, Chic Miller, Dr. Herb Anderson, Adolph Rosehill, Ken Gillrie and the list goes on.*
- 1900 Motion to purchase Subdivision 5 of Section 5 (apparently from Silverthorn’s at a cost of \$2500 for a full quarter section)
- 1903 Fair Admission set at \$0.25
- 1903 Olds Agricultural Society merges with the Trotting Horse Association (Turf Society)
- Membership increased from 49 in 1901 to 179 in 1903*
- 1904 Taxes set at \$2.50
- 1917 Present site of the Fair grounds were acquired from the Federal Government
- 1949 Land donated to the Town of Olds for the construction of the Ice Arena and Curling Rink. (400’ X 450’ in the northwest corner)
- 1948 Fair Admission set at \$1.25
- 1948 A partnership was formed with OAS, Olds Legion and the Curling Club to erect a new building. Also donated \$1000 to the Curling Club.
- 1950 Donated Lot B in Block 4 to National Defense (Present Recreation Center)
- 1961 First professional rodeo added to the Fair
- 1964 Upgraded to “B” Fair status
- 1964 Constructed original Cow Palace
- 1965 Constructed race track and infield
- 1968 Chamber of Commerce took over management of the parade
- 1969 Rodeo produced jointly by OAS and Olds College
- 1969 OAS offered Crown Assets Corp. \$5000 to purchase the Armories. The Town took over ownership with OAS receiving annual usage.
- 1976 Rodeo was no longer included as a component of the Fair

1977	Name changed to Mountain View County Fair
1978	Kiwanis Club of Olds donates \$5000 plus some labor for 10 years free use of the Kiwanis Barn
1978-1981	OAS received grant funding, donations and insurance proceeds to rebuild the original Cow Palace that burned during the fire of 1978
1981	Decision reached not to relocate to Olds College
1982	Olds Grizzlys Hockey Booster Club took over the Beer Gardens
1982	An agreement reached with Olds College for extended use of OAS facilities during the months of November to April
1983	Rodeo returns (at a loss of \$8000), Lions Club assists. Heavy Horses are stabled in the Sportsplex
1983	Classified as an "A" Status Fair
1984	Special Riding begins at OAS Facilities, still a regular feature of our events schedule
1985	OAS donates land for the construction of the Municipal Library
1985	Discussions again resurface regarding the possibility of relocating to Olds College
1985	Origin of the original Farmer's Market
1986	OAS becomes debt free and decides to begin investing a portion of the LOTTO Funds that are received annually for future improvements
1987	Dairy Show declared "All-Western," retains this status today
1988	OAS financially rescued the local 4-H Clubs when Water Valley Meat Packers bankruptcy left the members \$4700 short
1988	Donated land for the construction of the Evergreen Center
1989	Purchased the Peterson and Van Tighem properties (21 acres on the south side of 54 <sup>th</sup> Street)
1990	Built the Caluori Pavilion
1991	Introduction of "One Pay Gate"
1992	Formulation of Joint Use Agreement between Town of Olds and OAS regarding the ball diamonds and soccer fields (expired July 2007)
1993	Grandstand constructed
1994	Administration Building erected
1995	Construction of Stables Barn
1999	Celebrated Olds Agricultural Society's Centennial. Return of professional rodeo to the Fair (produced by Main Event Inc.)
2001	Negotiated an accepted offer to purchase the Dr. Harvey Cole

- 20 acre parcel that joins existing property to the south. Offsite levies and development fees implemented by the Town of Olds made this purchase impossible
- 2001 Joins the Olds & District Chamber of Commerce, Olds College and the Town of Olds to form the Olds Institute of Community & Regional Development (primarily a community and economic development body)
- 2001 OAS donates \$20,000 to the Olds College for the Farm Succession Program
- 2001 OAS donates \$20,000 to the Pool 2000 Committee
- 2002 OAS' Volunteer Rodeo Committee begin producing a professional rodeo in conjunction with the Fair
- 2003 OAS joins a Chamber driven initiative to develop a physical center that will serve the needs of the community
- 2005 OAS and Olds College conduct first annual joint board meeting – develop a working committee to review potential partnership opportunities (committee met in March – only meeting to date)
- 2005 OAS received a \$3.8 million capital grant from Alberta Lotteries for capital improvements
- 2005 OAS revisits the potential purchase of the Dr. Harvey Cole property. Makes a successful formal request to the Town of Olds for the waiving of offsite levies and development fees.
- 2005 Official name change to Olds Fair & Rodeo
- 2005 OAS receives \$150,000 commitment from the Rotary Club of Olds for development of a community center. This generous contribution resulted in a partnership that has OAS and the Rotarians working together to host the “Olds Tyme Music Festival” annually
- 2006 First Annual Chautauqua – Capital Campaign Launch
- 2006 OAS partners with CCIA (Canadian Cattle Identification Agency) to provide age verification services free of charge to producers as a satellite office
- 2006 Purchase of Dr. Harvey Cole property
- 2006 Partnership Agreement created with Olds College for the Gallop School (instructional opportunity for potential horse racing industry employees) hosted annually utilizing OAS' racetrack
- 2007 Agreement in Principal reached between Olds College and OAS on the summer utilization of the College Riding Arena
- 2007 Construction of MegaDomes – 60,350 sq.ft. of space designed for livestock events
- 2007 Joint use agreement with the Town of Olds regarding the

soccer pitches and ball diamond south of 54<sup>th</sup> street expired. This agreement was in place of 15 years and provided OAS with annual access to the Sportsplex in return for the sporting fields

- 2008 Hosted first large scale concert in the Cow Palace – Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. Tickets (900) were sold out within two hours.
- 2008 Partnership formed with CKLJ to host an annual classic rock concert – last Monday of July (Acts have included Nazareth, Trooper, April Wine, Sweet, Three Dog Night, Loverboy, Lou Gramm, the voice of Foreigner)
- 2008 Partnership formed with the Alberta Angus Association for OAS to fulfill full time administrative responsibilities and the production of newsletters
- 2009 In collaboration with many community groups, OAS hosts the Canadian Student Leadership Conference in the grandstand with rodeo events and a barbecue
- 2009 Bold decision by the membership at the September meeting to discontinue production of the annual Olds Fair & Rodeo
- 2010 Introductory year of numerous OAS produced, “stand alone” events, replacing the Olds Fair & Rodeo:
- Central Alberta Draft Horse Classic
  - Weekend of Wheels
  - Rock ‘n the Park
  - Summer Synergy
  - Western Heritage Weekend (Chuckwagons)
  - Olds Fall Classic
- 2012 Last production of Chautauqua (7 productions)
- 2012 OAS donates the land to Olds Institute for the construction of the central offices and infrastructure for O-Net
- Town of Olds removes OAS from the titles of the various properties along the north original boundary
- 2012 Hosted the World Hereford Conference – many highlights including the Town declaring a temporary renaming to “Herefordville” and hosting a final banquet in the Cow Palace for 1100
- 2013 In partnership with Rotary Club of Olds, Town of Olds, Olds College, Olds Fashioned Christmas Cow Palace Floor is paved with asphalt – facilitating increased diversity in the event portfolio

- 2013 Hosted the J.C. (Jack) Anderson Charity Auto Auction as one of the signature events for the Olds College Centennial
- 2013 Membership determines to officially change the name of Olds Agricultural Society to Olds Regional Exhibition
- 2014 Launch of new name – Olds Regional Exhibition
- 2015 Mountain View Special Riding attends the ORE AGM to provide a presentation of recognition of 25 years of free facility access. This truly inspirational program runs two nights per week for six weeks in the spring and six weeks in the fall. People with either physical or mental challenges are exposed to the amazing experience of “riding” a horse.
- 2015 Inaugural production of “Spring Fling.” A truly community driven unique production of a fun event that brought collaboration of service clubs – Rotary and Kiwanis as well as Olds Regional Exhibition. Olds Institute also provided support for this event that recognizes four charitable causes or projects with the 100% proceeds of the evening. The first four projects were – Splashpark, Olds Hospice, Community Kitchen and Olds Grizzlys. People’s Choice to receive 50% (\$15,000) was Olds Hospice. Community Kitchen project received \$5000 which Rotary was able to leverage for an additional \$7500 from their international association for a total of \$12,500.
- 2015 September’s inaugural production of Oldstoberfest (professional rodeo, concerts and beer gardens) was the site of the announcement of a \$90,000 grant from Federated Co-op for ORE’s Community Commercial Kitchen project
- 2016 ORE is selected to host 4-H Alberta’s Centennial in 2017
- 2016 June 16th ORE’s Board of Directors moved unanimously to proceed with the renovation of the Cow Palace’s existing galley style kitchen, office and board room into the Commercial Kitchen. A mezzanine will be constructed in the foyer to accommodate the functions of the lost space. ORE has retained \$30,000 of the Founders of the Gateway funds for this project as well.
- Rotary Club of Olds donates \$30,000 and Kiwanis Club of Olds donates \$10,000.