

# Buffalo Jump has a multicultural charm

**Getting Married in Buffalo Jump**  
by Susan Haley  
Macmillan, 1987  
208 pages

by M. Pidruchney

In Susan Haley's own words, her second published novel is "a kind of prediction about the relationship between an Anglo Saxon and a Ukrainian — farming people — in a small community." *Getting Married in Buffalo Jump* is a romantic web of humour and reality which brings together aspects of Anglo-Saxon, Ukrainian, and Native Indian cultures against the soothing, picturesque background of sunny Southern Alberta.

The time period is 1980. Mount St. Helen's has erupted, and Trudeau is beginning his final term of office. Sophie Ware, only child, WASP, attractive kindergarten teacher, is living with her mother on their farm and having a difficult time looking after it. Along comes Alexander Bresnyachuk, a good looking and hard-working 'older brother' type. He proposes marriage to Sophie with one eye on

her land and the other windowing his desire just to be married. Here follows their courtship, during which time Sophie's curiosity about Alexander's past leads her to make mysterious and intriguing discoveries until the final happy and satisfying conclusion.

Sophie's discoveries reveal Alexander's close involvement with his Indian friends, especially his blood brother, Benedict Malone. Benedict is introduced into the story through dialogue, chiefly through the words of his sister and Alexander's first lover, Annie. He is presented as a hero, and indeed is one to all except Sophie. In the end, however, he is seen as a man unwittingly torn apart by those who idolized him. It's quite a story.

The humour in the book is found in many areas. Sophie is somewhat petty in her relationship with her mother, and is often presented as a frustrated and humiliated youngster stamping her foot. In one instance, she is afraid to get out of Alexander's truck because of the geese running about. Alexander's parents, "Poppa" and "Momma", are quite

comical, pouring drinks left and right and speaking in deliberately broken English.

There is humour also in the fact that Alexander proposes at the beginning of the story and not at the usual end spot, and in the sexual dealings of the novel. For example, Sophie keeps wanting and trying to get into bed with Alexander. The sexual suspense is heightened by descriptions of Alexander's body, and by Sophie's apparent worldliness — including her affair with the skinny school principal. The fact that big, uneducated Alexander wants to marry the young, rich schoolteacher is amusing in itself.

Haley's style is simple and her descriptions of the setting are poetic. She furnishes the reader with a beautiful picture of summer prairie life. The mix of three cultures is believable here in multicultural Alberta, and we are given an accurate and sympathetic, albeit comical, depiction of reality. *Getting Married in Buffalo Jump* is easy to follow and hard to put down. In a down-to-earth and articulate manner, a colourful and charming story is successfully presented.

## ACTION CALENDAR

### Thursday 24

- EVENTS**  
**ANTONY & CLEOPATRA** Shakespeare's Tragic Cosmos lecture, see Sept23.  
**YOUNG EXECUTIVES CLUB** first general meeting, refreshments, BUS 1-05 4pm.  
**LA TRAVIATA** Edmonton Opera, love affair set in Paris, Jubilee Auditorium, 427-9622, 8pm.  
**NATIONAL PARKS DEVELOPMENT:** Global perspectives, lecture by Dr. James Butler, HUM L-1 7:30pm, free.  
**EXHIBITS**  
**STRUCTURED PARADISE:** A National Park Experience, photographic documentation of Banff, Ring House Gallery (UofA) 11am-5pm, free.  
**APILLERAS** Chilean Folk Art, Provincial Museum, 12845 102av 10am-8pm.  
**LOOKING THROUGH THE GLASS** 5 women photographers, Latitude 53 Gallery, 10920 88av 10am-6pm.  
**FIGURATIVE SCULPTURE** Agnezka Matjenko, MVA, Paint Spot, 10325 Whyte Ave 9am-6pm.  
**FILM**  
**BETTY BLUE** Princess 9pm.

### Friday 25

- EVENTS**  
**HOCKEY** Bears, Molson invitational, Varsity Arena 7:30pm.  
**SOCCER** Bears vs. UBC, Faculte St. Jean 4pm.  
**HOCKEY** Oilers vs. Toronto, Coliseum 7:30, \$6.50 rush seats.  
**EXHIBITIONS**  
**STRUCTURED PARADISE** see Sept22.  
**FIGURATIVE SCULPTURE** see Sept22.  
**LOOKING THROUGH THE GLASS** see Sept22.  
**APILLERAS** see Sept22.  
**FILM**  
**WITCHES OF EASTWICK SUB** the 're, 8pm, \$1.  
**LA TRICHE** NFT, Victor Lanoux plays a married bisexual police inspector drawn into blackmail and murder, Edm Art Gallery, 8pm, \$4.  
**REAR WINDOW** Hitchcock, Princess, 7pm.

### Saturday 26

- EVENTS**  
**BEAR COUNTRY** beerfest, bands: Pursuit of Happiness, Slippin' Lizards, UofA students only - ID required, Butterdome 7:30, \$12 door.  
**HOCKEY** Bears, see Sept25.  
**SOCCER** Bears vs. U Vic Faculte St. Jean 2pm.  
**SOCCER** Pandas vs. Edm Angels, 10am.  
**MOTOR MANIA** Coliseum 8pm, info: 471-7373.  
**LA TRAVIATA** see Sept24.  
**EXHIBITS**  
**FIGURATIVE SCULPTURE** see Sept22.  
**LOOKING THROUGH THE GLASS** see Sept22.  
**APILLERAS** see Sept22.  
**FILM**  
**TOP GUN** SUB theatre 8pm, \$1.  
**LA TRICHE** see Sept25.

# Parachute Club is flying high again

by Sherri Ritchie

With a new lineup and a changed outlook, The Parachute Club have once again found the focus and enthusiasm that initially brought them recognition.

Both Julie Masi and Lori Conger have left the band, and have been replaced by Rebecca Jenkins and Evelyn Badl. "What happened was the inevitable changing membership of any band that is bigger than two people," drummer Billy Bryans commented matter-of-factly on the circumstances surrounding the split. "A band is like a relationship; they change," he said. "There were no problems, it was more the fact that peoples' lives were changing in terms of what they wanted to do."

Bryans explained the myths surrounding a musical group. "People outside the music business have an idealistic attitude," he said. "They think you put a band together, get famous and stay together, like the Beatles."

Bryans commented that their *Small Victories* tour had taken them a bit off track. "We learned a lot on our last tour, playing those types of venues (such as the Edmonton Convention Centre) are not where we're at," he said. "In a large place like that you're cut off



Band wants bigger victories

physically from your audience and that doesn't work for us."

The Club just recently toured Germany where they rediscovered exactly where they should be at. "We were playing clubs," said Bryans, "and those smaller clubs took us back to our roots in a sense."

Their last album, in some ways, also turned out to be a learning experience for them. "The last album didn't work out in some respects and in some respects it was a big jump for us," he said.

"They had intended to make a bit of an international break with *Small Victories* but

fell short. The album did quite well in Canada and Germany, but it seemed to miss the American market.' With John Oates (U.S. Hall and Oates fame) producing, we thought we had an in . . . but it didn't work," said Bryans. "We're Canadian artists and let's face it," he said, "unless you work in a country with an international outlet, it's hard to make a break. We would like to do just that, but how to do it is a whole other story."

A new album is not an active concern of the Club right now. They have been working on material in fits and starts, but are not exactly sure of the schedule. "We plan to be in the studio by February," said Bryans.

For now, the Parachute Club is getting back to where they should be, playing to crowds who are on their feet. "I doubt if for a long time we'll do those sit down shows," said Bryans. "When we're in town this time you can look for a far more high energy show," he added. "We're looking forward to getting back and letting people know we're still playing."

The Parachute Club will be performing in Dinwoodie on Friday, September 25, and at Shinerama in the Convention Centre on Saturday.

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LIST YOUR EVENT IN THE ACTION CALENDAR.

SUBMIT ENTRIES TO THE GATEWAY ROOM 282 SUB. ALL ENTRIES SUBJECT TO EDITING.