Hall’s hard work produces saddle

By Dawn Sugimoto [May 19, 1987]

Doug Hall dedicated his time and his skill, and the result is a handcrafted saddle commemorating the Cardston Centennial.

"I started on it at the end of January, and I didn't get it done until the middle of April. That was working after hours and on weekends. I was putting in many a midnight on it," said Hall, who owns and operates the Trophy and Leather Works shop where the saddle is usually on display.

Hall came up with the idea for a Centennial saddle in November and approached the Cardston Agriculture Society. The Agriculture Society bought the saddle from Hall for a fund-raising raffle.

"I thought it would be nice to design a Centennial saddle. And I thank Guido Pontarollo and Calvin Jensen (of the Agriculture Society) for giving me the opportunity to do it."

The saddle is made of ponderosa pine covered with rawhide. It has a 16-inch seat. A breast collar and saddle pad will be raffled off with the saddle.

"We had to make the patterns as we went along. We started with two half sides of leather and the tree. Then you've got to shape everything out of it."

Hall had help on the project. "Colleen Yuill did the drawing and helped me with the patterning. I can't draw at all."

"The saddle is all hand carved, hand stamped and hand made. It's one of a kind."

Much of the sewing and all of the saddle's intricate rose designs were carved out by hand.

Hall said the finished product can be used as a work or a show saddle.

Hall estimated the value of the saddle at $1,800.

Though Hall has been in the leather business for 30 years, he only started making saddles in 1962. He learned the skill from Don Baird. "Without him I wouldn't be doing any of this stuff." Baird of Fort Macleod has been making saddles for 45 years.

"I've been doing this for five years, and I'm still learning. I'm more at ease now, but I've got a lot to learn yet. The only way I can do that is make more saddles."

The draw for the saddle will take place at the RCMP musical ride June 25. There were 750 tickets printed for the raffle.