

Hi. I'm William, or Billy, Udall. Why am I famous? You ask. Well, throughout the early 1900s, I've been the editor of The Boissevain Recorder, our local newspaper. But, I'm known more widely, for being one of the founders of the International Peace Garden. Greatness was in the air though. The 1920s provided great promise, and I found myself eyebrows deep in some truly wonderful projects.

For instance, until recently there was no road over Turtle Mountain, running between Boissevain and Dunseith. I worked with political leaders in Manitoba and North Dakota to correct that. The border is necessary, I realize, but we feel it shouldn't discourage business and friendship.

With the contacts I made, I got involved in creating a continuous highway running from Manitoba's north to the Panama Canal. It's become the longest north-south highway on the planet; which brings traffic through the Peace Garden border post; which in turn boosts our border towns. Cars and trucks are still new to us. We're creating a new international economy. Quite exciting!

A few years ago, a Mr. JJ Musgrove, brought me a story. A horticulturalist, Dr Henry Moore from Ontario, was looking for a place to build a Garden of Peace to celebrate the world's longest undefended border. It became my obsession to plant this garden along our new highway, on top of Turtle Mountain. After all, we're mid way along the 3,000 mile border. And, our mountain is rich in forests and lakes; a cherished place for us. Why not for visitors as well?!

After an aerial tour, Dr Moore was easy to convince. The rest, happened quickly! Manitoba offered 1,400 acres of parkland. North Dakota offered 900 acres of farmland. By July 1932 we were opening the International Peace Garden! Over 50,000 people gathered, persevering with skinny-tired cars over windy, muddy roads, to unveil the commemorative cairn at the Garden's gateway, smack-dab on the border, a few paces west of #10 highway. Visualize that sight with me. 50,000 supporters. Our hearts were literally bursting!

Unveiling the cairn was certainly exciting. But we needed serious money to pay designers, machines and builders. We thought we'd ask individuals to donate: to create a "people's

garden". Our campaign was impressive; using every media available. Pre-schoolers across North America were asked to give five cents, every school-aged child ten cents and every adult at least twenty-five cents. Unfortunately, the Great Depression closed in and minimized our success. Twenty-five cents is almost a day's wages!



*The celebration - 1932*

So, we moved on, asking governments and non-profits to adopt, build and pay for specific portions of the design. A massive boost came from the US through their Great Depression make-work program, the Civilian Conservation Corp. Men arrived to clear brush, and to build. They constructed the iconic Historic Lodge using granite from the American side of the mountain and timber from the Manitoba side. Creating partnerships, like this, seems to work.

Cooperation and Selflessness indeed. On the Canadian side, Lake Storman is named after an American, a long-term President of the Garden. On the American side, Lake Udall is named after me. Perhaps this is what it takes. Less national ego. Isn't it ironic, eh? That selflessness can make us famous!

**Peace Garden**, was inspired by the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Peace Garden.

<https://peacegarden.com/discover/history/>  
[http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb\\_history/31/peacegarden.shtml](http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/31/peacegarden.shtml)  
[http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/people/udall\\_wv.shtml](http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/people/udall_wv.shtml)

*Vantage Points Flashbacks were written by David Neufeld with help from Betty Sawatzky. They were originally aired on CJRB Radio out of Boissevain, Manitoba in the early 2020s.*