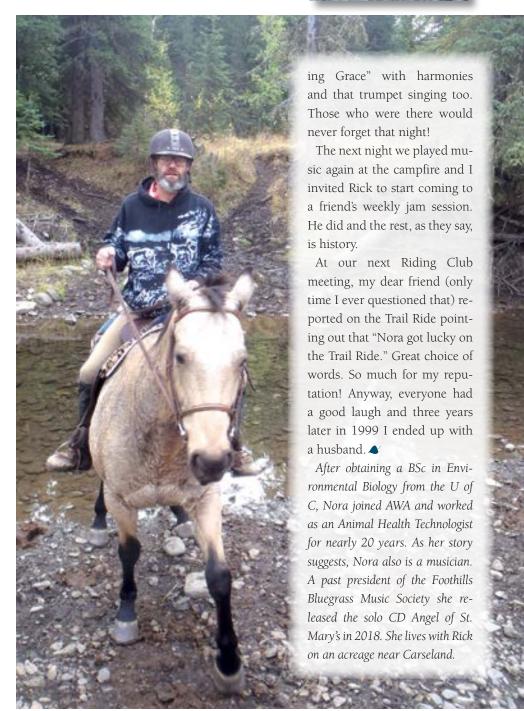
Mesa Butte Romance

By Nora Maidman

eople sometimes ask how Rick and I met. Our marriage is the second one for both of us with our previous partners long gone and no children to tie us to them. Rick is seven years younger so I was 42 and Rick was 35 when we met.

Not surprisingly, it was horses and music that brought us together. The Mesa Butte Equestrian campground in Kananaskis Country has a group camping area and my Riding Club had it booked for the long weekend in September. The Club has booked a weekend at Mesa Butte every summer since the early 1980s. The more experienced riders taught the newer ones the fine art of safe, responsible trail riding in the mountains. We had room for more people so some friends from other riding clubs came out for the weekend. Rick was one of these. We both rode with our own friends but in the evening the community campfire attracted everyone. I was sitting at the fire playing my guitar and singing when this bearded fellow in a fringed leather jacket showed up carrying his guitar. That was Rick and that was the first time we met.

That night was quite special. Among the group around the campfire were a couple of professional musicians from the Foothills Brass. He had his trumpet along which was normal for him. You might wonder how a trumpet fits into a sing-song around a campfire but he made it work! He did beautiful little fills in between the words of the songs and it was magic. Then, as the moon came up over the ridge, the whole group sang "Amaz-



Nora's husband Rick... their courtship and marriage may perhaps be one of the more unusual gifts offered by Alberta's provincial parks system. PHOTO: © N. MAIDMAN