



**Jasper-Yellowhead
Museum & Archives**

Curly Phillips

Curly Phillips' name is well known in Jasper. Donald "Curly" Phillips (1884-1938) first came to Jasper in 1909 outfitting for Reverend Kinny's attempt on Mt. Robson and A.O. Wheeler's survey of Mt. Robson (1911). He settled

permanently in Jasper in 1912, setting up an outfitting business. Over the years he worked on many Alpine Club of Canada camps in the area.

Besides being a guide and outfitter in the early 1900's, he was responsible for building the boathouse that is still standing at Maligne Lake. A picture of Curly Phillips cutting logs on top of the Shangri-la cabin is a testament to his skill with an axe. Phillips also built many boats and canoes in his lifetime and some are still in the Jasper area. Maligne Tours often puts The Leah on display in parades and one of Phillips' beautiful red canoes hangs in the Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives. Curly Phillips' canoes were so sought after that one was even shipped to Charles Bedaux in France!

A phone call from Vern Truxler alerted the JYMA to another piece of the Phillips history in the park. Phillips built 12 dog sleds for the Jasper Wardens in 1930 and Mr. Truxler still has one in safe keeping. The sleds were made from hand-hewn birch planks and bound with rawhide. Mr. Truxler's sled belonged to Charlie Matheson, a Jasper National Park warden in the 1900's. Charlie married Mona Harragin and guide and outfitter Mark Truxler married her sister, Agnes. Agnes and Mona were the first female guides licensed in the park. The sled passed from Mona to her nephew Vern who is donating it to the Jasper-Yellowhead Museum to keep it in his hometown of Jasper.

There is a photograph of Charlie Matheson with his dogs and this sled on his Brazeau District in 1934 in the book "One Man's Mountains" about pioneer skier Joe Weiss, written by Helen Collinson in 1979.

It is sad to note that Harry Phillips with his dog "Red" used a similar sled to recover Curly Phillips body after he was killed in an avalanche near Elysium Pass in 1938.