



**Jasper-Yellowhead  
Museum & Archives**

## Research project by Mr. Siddal's grade eleven class of 1947-48

Every once in a while a gem surfaces in the archives—sometimes brought to light by a query or linked to research in another area. Recently the archives staff rediscovered a beautiful

wooden binder that was a research project by Mr. Siddal's grade eleven class of 1947-48. The project came to attention of the Jasper Home and School Association the following year and a motion was made to look into publishing the book.

"It contains 176 pages and has caused a great deal of comment and enthusiasm wherever it has been seen. It has been mentioned on two or three radio programs and has traveled to Winnipeg, Ottawa, Montreal and Edmonton numerous times."

The binder includes information on the history of Jasper and research on the rivers, lakes, mountains, flora and fauna. There are wonderful sketches, watercolours and many old photos as well as several interviews of Jasper's past residents.

The book itself is interesting enough but the story gets better. Constance Peterson reported to the Jasper Historical Society in 1964 that in 1956 Gordon Peers, the principal of the Jasper High School loaned the book to a Mrs. Brinkley who lived at that time in Banff. She said she was gathering material for a historical book she hoped to write. When Mr. Peers left the school he told the incoming principal, Dean Tweedle, that the book had not been returned. When Mr. Tweedle contacted Mrs. Brinkley she told him she would be coming to Jasper in the near future to interview Edd Neighbour for her book. He never heard from her. After Edd Neighbour died, Mrs. Neighbour told him that Mrs. Brinkley had tried to get them to invest money in publishing her book and when they told her they wouldn't, they never heard from her again.

In 1962 Mrs. Peterson heard about the lost book and started her enquiries and enlisted the R.C.M.P in Banff, Calgary and Edmonton in looking for Mrs. Brinkley. The latter reported that Mrs. Brinkley had died at the Oliver Mental Institute in 1961 but there was no sign of the Jasper book in her possessions. Mrs. Peterson continued to search and the Central Alberta Chamber of Commerce helped by going to the newspapers and radio to publicize the

story. It turned out that Mrs. Brinkley "was something of a screwball" and had operated a swindle operation to obtain money from businesses to erect a David Thompson Memorial at Rocky Mountain House. "This memorial turned out to be a matter of a few stones." Fred Brewster was among the people who loaned Mrs. Brinkley books or papers but was lucky enough to get his back Mrs. Peterson was told that when a person was asked for the return of some loaned property. Mrs. Brinkley would sometimes calmly state: "I have no property of yours. I have never seen you before in my life."

Thanks to Mrs. Peterson's efforts the Jasper book was eventually located in Banff among the late Mrs. Brinkley's papers and now resides in the Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives.

Be sure to take in Tristen Overy's dynamic exhibit before April 24. This is the last in JAG's wonderful 2005 series.