



## Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives

Not only does 2007 mark the centennial of Jasper National Park but it is also the bicentennial celebration of one of Canada's greatest explorers and map makers, David Thompson. From the Northwest Company trading post at Rocky Mountain House, Thompson made his way up the North Saskatchewan River to find a

route through the mountains to the Columbia River in 1807 via Howse Pass. Thompson had to abandon this route after angering the Piegan Indians by trading guns with their enemies.

Although Thompson made his way over Howse Pass in 1807, he didn't enter the Athabasca Valley until the winter of 1810-11. Thompson and his men made their way north to the Athabasca Valley and spent the latter part of 1810 near Brule Lake preparing for a winter journey by making snowshoes and dog sleds.

Guided by Thomas the Iroquois they started up the Athabasca River passing the outlet of the Maligne River on the 4th of January. Before turning up the Whirlpool Valley Thompson left the horses and surplus supplies with one of his men, William Henry. Henry was charged with spending the winter building a small post from which he could care for the horses and supplies. Although Thompson notes the location of Henry House and later explorers mention seeing the ruins of the post, the location of Henry House remains a mystery.

Thompson and his remaining men started the long difficult climb up the Whirlpool Valley. Two of the men were sent ahead to beat down the track as the dogs were swimming in the deep snow. Here Thompson notes seeing the track of a large animal that was fourteen inches long by eight inches wide with four large toes. The Indians travelling with him were worried that their ammunition would have no effect on an animal of that size. Conditions got worse as they continued towards the pass and Thompson writes of broken snowshoes and sleds and how disgusted he was when the men beat their dogs. The men were eating eight pounds of meat per day but went without when the hunting was bad. After killing a moose or deer they gorged themselves and then dried some of the meat to take on their journey. On January 11 they reached Athabasca Pass and started down the other side of the divide. The following day Thompson wrote letters on boards for William Henry and the North West Company partners and sent several men back to William Henry's House. Even going downhill the travelling was difficult and for

the next few weeks Thompson and his men struggled through the deep snow making their way towards the area now known as Boat Encampment. By the end of January Thompson had decided to set up camp while searching out materials to build canoes for his trip on the Columbia. In April Thompson embarked in a canoe upstream to Saleesh House where he built another canoe for his journey to the mouth of the Columbia River. He arrived on July 15, 1811 to find John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company had already established a trading post. If he was disappointed, he didn't note it in his journals saying only that they were received politely by Astor's men and that they planned to stay several days to refresh themselves.

In 2007 we will see the start of many special events for the Bicentennial of David Thompson. These events will continue for the next four years to commemorate the life of one of Canada's greatest explorers. The Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives and Parks Canada would like to invite you to a talk and book signing by Jack Nisbet author of *Sources of the River* and *The Mapmaker's Eye*, May 4th at 7 pm in the museum's Bridgland Room. There is also a breakfast meeting planned at the Caledonia Grill on May 5th at 8 am. For more information, please contact Ken Walker at 852-6190.

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## Hartley

### *Fonds Memories: The Incredible Hartleys*

The archives is full of histories and stories about individuals and families; strengths and hardships, and great innovation. Perspectives, whether autobiographical or written by another person offer a different view of the family history and different experiences that complete a broader understanding of that family and their lives. The tone and mood of the story will always change depending on the narrator. One narrative is never more important than another rather it becomes another facet to the story. The Hartleys of Jasper have many facets to their story. The following excerpts were written by Kay Piersdorff (Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives – Hartley Information File):

*"Daisy Hartley was born Daisy Jane O'Bannon, in Mattoon, Illinois, in 1877. In one small rebellious burst, she changed the Jane to May, because she didn't like the grandmother she had been named after. Her dream of training for nursing had to be abandoned when her mother died at a young age, so she went to work in a piece-work factory where she*

*learned to sew, cut her patterns, and design patterns as well...*

*George Williamson Hartley was born in Butler County, Ohio in 1878. His dream of being an electric engineer had to be abandoned after just one year at Lincoln University (Illinois), when his father died, and he himself caught Typhoid fever. He took theological training in Dayton, Ohio, but would have to wait for ordination until a church became available. He went to work as a Y.M.C.A. secretary while he waited.*

*...George and Daisy were married in 1902, they stayed in Mattoon for one year, during which their first child, David was born ...The move to Jasper was prompted by the knowledge that the church and the Y.M.C.A would not really provide shelter, food, clothing, and education for his large family, so George abandoned both to work for the Canadian National Railway. He chose Jasper and Daisy had no choice but to follow.*

*Not long after the move to Jasper the Jasper Park Lodge opened and once more Daisy saw new opportunities to add to the family income while getting back [into] selling. She obtained franchises for a California Perfume Company (later Avon) and for Sobie's Silks Ltd., a lingerie shop in Vancouver, and she went to the Lodge to take orders from the female staff. When the orders came in, she would take them to the Lodge, pulling a wagon, in the early evenings.*

George Hartley Sr. died in 1936 and in order to support herself, Daisy decided to open a shop and sell appliances, china, and other trinkets. She was the first Easy Washing Machine dealer east of Vancouver...She kept aware of what went on in Jasper by the many women who dropped in her store, and in the years between 1964 – 1966, she wrote for the Jasper Totem (later the Booster) as Mayflower, commenting on things that went on in town and also keeping the town's history alive..."

Recently, during some spring-cleaning in the Archives, a scrapbook was stumbled upon. It contained complex drawings, custom blueprints, engineering drafts and artistic doodles by George Hartley. Perhaps some of the drafts contain the answers to local legends that surround Mr. Hartley. George Hartley was an ingenious man who never gave up his love for engineering. He was constantly tinkering and planning. He gained local fame with his 1924 Dodge touring car. He converted the touring car into a truck that ran on 'lunkenheimer fuel'. A fuel comprised of distilled water and kerosene.

Another legend was about a series of underground tunnels underneath the Hartley home. The house was destroyed in a fire and the area has since been

redeveloped, but rumours and stories of the tunnels remain. According to local, Arvon Hilworth, the tunnels truly did exist. He even claims to have been in them once, "They were used for storage, of course." Hilworth laughs. Hilworth also confirmed that the tunnels had been filled when the lot was redeveloped.

There is not much in the way of personal information left by George Hartley, which is why the scrapbook turned out to be a real find. The documents in the scrapbook are a testament to Hartley's genius, and although many locals may have written George off as an eccentric, there appears to have been method to his madness. Daisy, on the other hand, kept extensive personal notes and diaries and her notes offer insight into her life, her struggles and her joys. Discover another facet to the Hartley story or other family stories and visit your friendly neighbourhood archives.

*PHOTOGRAPH CAPTION: Photograph of Daisy Hartley with her daughters. L-R: daughter-in-law Alice (married to Dave Hartley), daughter Jean (Mrs. Arline), daughter Katherine (Mrs. H. Piersdorff), Daisy Hartley herself and daughter Margaret (Mrs. K.M. Anderson).*