



Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives

Picking up your Residents Parks Pass is one of Jasper's annual rites of spring. Having the resident's pass dangling from your rear view mirror entitles you to a friendly wave through the park gates and sets your vehicle apart from those of Jasper's many visitors.

In the earliest days of Jasper National Park's history, visitors arrived on foot, by horse and by train. Once the Grande Trunk Pacific Railway line reached Fitzhugh in 1911, the services available in the park were geared to visitors arriving by train and travelling within the park on foot or by horse. In the early 1900s a few cars were shipped to Jasper by train but there were few roads suitable for automobiles. Gradually horseless carriages gained acceptance and several local businesses offered tours by either horse or automobile. Among the first to own cars in the park were the Brewsters, Ottos and Neighbors. In 1922 the first automobiles succeeded in travelling from Edmonton to Victoria via the Yellowhead Pass using part of the old railway bed that was abandoned when the some of the tracks were torn up during WWI. It was an epic trip and involved building bridges over rivers.

As early as 1911 the National Parks were regulating automobiles by charging a fee of 25 cents to be paid to the Park Superintendent or the North West Mounted Police. This fee included a camping permit. By 1919 a fee of \$1.00 was established for a visit lasting up to a week and a maximum set at \$4.00. From 1911 to 1925 stickers were placed on the windshields. In 1925 visitors were offered something new:

Aluminum Buffalo Badge For Tourists Entering The National Park

To replace the old descriptive stickers on automobile windshields the Rocky Mountain Park department has issued a beautifully designed aluminum badge which can be wired to the radiator of cars in a couple of minutes. The badge will be presented to all tourists entering the park by auto and who pay the usual \$1.00 license fee, is a very neat and attractive, and depicts a buffalo, reproduced from an actual photograph. Beneath the buffalo the words "Canadian National Park" are neatly moulded. Two small holes are drilled at the base of the badge to permit the attaching of a small plate bearing the dates of future years.

The size of the badge is three inches high and four inches wide and is a considerable improvement over the old windshield sticker. It is guaranteed absolutely rust proof.

J. M. Wardle, chief engineer of the Parks Department, who brought one of the badges to the Crag & Canyon for inspection a few days ago, claims that they will be attached to over

20,000 automobiles from all parts of the world this season.

From Banff's Crag & Canyon, June 5, 1925.

The metal plaques were attached to the radiator or front bumper of all vehicles entering the parks from 1925 to 1940. For the first three years these plates were issued without dates, using brass for 1925, copper for 1926 and aluminum for 1927. In later years, dates were added but the sequence of brass, copper and aluminum was continued. Minor modifications were later made to the design including a change from the walking buffalo (1925-31) to a standing buffalo (1932-40). The later design had a base with a slot for screwing it onto the car. Some plates were re-stamped to enable the government to re-use left over plates from the previous year and some were re-stamped by the public! Some of these plates are quite valuable.

The Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives has a selection but would like to have a complete collection of all the park passes, including stickers and the rear view mirror design. In honour of Jasper National Park's Centennial we have re-created the buffalo plaque and have it for sale for \$20.00 at the museum gift shop. Unfortunately, the JNP gate attendants will not wave you through if you attach it to your car!

