



The Jasper Signal

Jasper-Yellowhead
Historical Society
Fall 2015

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Fall Outing

At the Palisades Centre- in the Garage
Sunday October 18 -1 pm to 4 pm

Mike Dillon, Culture Resource Specialist with Parks Canada, will talk on the use of the area from an aboriginal camp to a youth stewardship centre.

Refreshments will be served, please bring your own mug. Presentation will be inside, a walking tour will follow.

President's Review...The issue is....

The issue is - we've lost one of our stalwart volunteers and a true patron of the Jasper Yellowhead Historical Society. In a broader context, the community of Jasper can say the same. Joe Couture was never one to shy away from issues, and he liked to pin down what he thought was the essence of every debate. "The issue is . . ."; one of his trademark phrases. His passing early in the morning of September 9th has left some big shoes to be filled. Well - maybe a size 5, but figuratively, large indeed.

We can only imagine the degree to which Joe expended energy on worthwhile causes. We do know, of course, how much time he spent with us, joining our Board in 2000. We also know full well his response to other community demands, whether Home Accommodation Association, Chamber of Commerce, Planning and Development Advisory Committee (PDAC), Senior Hockey and Heaven

(Continued on page 8)



In Memory of Joe Couture



Joe Couture, born 1941 in Rossland BC, came to Jasper in 1964 and worked as a ski instructor at Whistler Ski Hill and as a ski coach for the Jasper Ski Team (1965-1972). Joe was a co-director with Tom McCready of the Marmot Ski School (1970-1976) and Director (1976-1982). Promoting Jasper and skiing he developed a ski package, tour business with a central reservation component. Joe served as president of the Jasper Chamber of Commerce (1985-1988). He then served as an elected member of the municipal government of Jasper's Town Council for several years. So many of his early years in Jasper were spent on seasonal work and as he and his wife Sheila raised their family it meant the two of them could share time with their girls.

He was a long time member and served on the board of the Jasper Yellowhead Historical Society, his latest role as the society's historian. Joe, along with Tom McCready, was inducted into the Canadian Ski Instructors Alliance Hall of Fame at the CSIA AGM in April 2014 in Jasper.

Always a promoter, this year's upcoming duck race will again be a financial success to the Jasper Museum and the Right to Read societies thanks to Joe's never ending fundraising sales pitch.

A Celebration of Joe Couture's Life will be held on Sunday, October 4th at 2:00pm in the Activity Centre.

In lieu of flowers, a donation can be made to the Jasper Yellowhead Museum



Yes ... the Ducks are all there and the race is fair!

23rd Annual Great Duck Race

Sunday September 27, 2015 at 1 pm

The ducks take the plunge off the Miette River Bridge on Hwy 93 at 1 pm.

1000 ducks, \$1500.00 in prizes.
\$5 tickets may still be available at the museum!

Profits from the duck race are shared by the Right to Read Society and the Jasper Yellowhead Historical Society.



Golf Raffle, Cavell Opening and Thanks

Raffle tickets for Sandy Robinson's framed "Eleventh Fairway from the Tee" original watercolour painting continue to be sold at the Jasper Museum and the Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge Golf Pro Shop. The painting is on display in the museum as part of the 90th anniversary of golfing at the Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge. Tickets are \$5, profits to Jasper's museum, draw date Tuesday October 13, 2015.



"It is the passion to create that encourages my enthusiasm for photography and also music. Since I first discovered them as a young teenager, I have had a deep connection to both.

It was however, the feel and smell of film and chemistry that got into my subconscious, becoming something I would crave to experience over and over. Now, 40 years later, I am still in awe of the camera arts. I am still learning and still finding the excitement in a fine photograph. It is a melting pot of science and visual art like no other artistic endeavor." Ron Brown

Wine and Cheese Opening Saturday Oct 10.

6 pm - wine & cheese opening of the Edith Cavell Exhibit - Free to all

7 pm - 8 pm - One Woman Edith Cavell Theatre Presentation. Pre-event tickets on sale at the museum. \$10 adults, \$5 kids & seniors. (in conjunction with the Jasper Theatre Company and Habitat for the Arts)

8 pm - 9 pm - informal Q&A with Edith Cavell and socializing in the galleries.

Edith
Cavell
Returns
1915 ~ 2015
Photograph by Ron Brown

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION
MOUNT EDITH CAVELL IN BLACK & WHITE
BY RON BROWN

JASPER MUSEUM
SEPT 12 ~ NOV 14
WINE & CHEESE OPENING OCTOBER 10 6PM

Thank You from Ronit Barenboim, Summer Student/Museum Attendant, Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives

Well, JYMA and historical society, it's been a blast! I have had an absolutely incredible time working at the museum this summer. I look back to the beginning of May 2015 when I first dropped off my resume to volunteer and I still can't believe how lucky I am in having gained this paid position (thanks to the Young Canada Works grant).

Throughout this summer I have gained valuable experience conducting research for exhibits and mini-outings; maintaining records and archives of photographs, artifacts, and news articles; and even providing my creative input on setting up exhibit displays. DeeDee, Carla, and Andy have been so great in teaching me the ropes of the museum world, which I will apply to my future in libraries. Thank you everyone for your support, wisdom, and even just your kindness! I hope to be back next summer!



Canoe River November 21, 1950 Andy Klimach

Two Missing Words Spell Tragedy as Dief the Chief stands Up for the Underdog

More often than not disasters can be caused by a simple breakdown in communication-- a truth many politicians know all too well. And while history does not repeat itself, it does show us patterns that seem to inevitably lead to repeated outcomes, and repeated learning from such outcomes. One case is the Canoe River Railway Disaster-- it too, the result of just two key missed words.

As the children of the deceased were removed from school on that cold, and snowy 21st of November 21st, 1950, Jasperites were just learning of the horrific details leading to the deaths of 17 members of the Canadian Armed Forces and 4 Canadian National employees. What had caused one of the worst railway disasters in British Columbia? How did a west bound train carrying troops to the Korean War collide head on with passenger No. 2 The Continental Limited? Who was responsible? And how would the resulting case give a future prime minister national exposure?

The crash happened at Mile 82.3, east of the switch at Canoe River, B.C near Valemount almost 65 years ago. No one on either train had any idea what would happen as they seemingly winded their way through the Rockies playing cards and enjoying the snow capped peaks. However, at Red Pass Junction the troop train received an incomplete order in which the engineer and conductor read, "Psgr Extra 3538 West, Meet No. 2eng 6057 ----- No. 4 eng 6057 at Gosnell AET.

The missing words happened to be "at Cedarside" and was received by Train No 2 coming from the opposite direction. With no further orders the trains began a deadly dance towards each other through the twists and curves of the tracks until it was far too late to brake and a collision was unavoidable. Steam poured out, metal twisted, and human life was lost in terrible fashion as the two trains met in a frightful embrace, killing 17 and injuring 60 others.

However, Canadians are no cowards and the troops aboard the train that suffered the most casualties quickly went to work helping the injured. Assistance to the devastated was quickly dispatched as the townsfolk of Jasper were shocked by what they heard. Soon, an investigation would follow and a young man would bear the blunt of the blame-- only to be defended in trial by none other than "Dief the Chief".

In his biography, One Canada, former prime minister John Diefenbaker would recount his involvement in the manslaughter trial of Alfred John Atherton, the 22 year old operator to whom the blame was laid for the Canoe River disaster for "improperly relaying an order originating with the CNR's dispatcher in Kamloops" and Diefenbaker was subsequently implored by his ailing wife to see Atherton after she had spoken with him and that "everyone in the CNR is running away from responsibility for what appears to be a grievous disregard for human lives."

Diefenbaker met with a distraught and seemingly doomed Atherton, who decried Atherton as having only one passport-- to prison. The odds were against him and Dief agreed to be his defense counsel. After passing his B.C. bar exam and studying railway transmission history, a highly animated and clever Mr. Diefenbaker was able to get Mr. Atherton acquitted on the basis of the possibility of the heavy snowfall impeding the successful transmission of the missing words "at Cedarside" and not human error in preventing the resulting disaster.

Following the trail, all sorts of changes were made to communication protocol for railway travel and operations followed by updated technology. As a result, train disasters across all of Canada remain very few and far between. And in the near 65 years since the loss of life happened and affected many, may this anniversary be a chilling reminder for the importance of ensuring the right words at the right time.

Author's note: This has been a very brief summary of the Canoe River Disaster and much more information is available for viewing and research at the Jasper Yellowhead Museum & Archives. I have based my article on research from this information and in particle "The Canoe River Wreck" by Harry Home, One Canada, by the Right Honourable John George Diefenbaker, and a personal interview with Mrs. Glenda Cornforth, who lost her father in the disaster as a young lady of 14. Any semblance to any other writings on this topic is purely coincidental.



Weather Watch

Taken from Nora Findlay's "People From the Past", a regular column in the Jasper Booster

In the 1930's weather stations were set up in all small towns. Results from the finding of these small stations were reported to Edmonton, every three hours, night and day. These findings were charted and studied by knowledgeable people who could read the patterns; weather predicting became a fine art.

In Jasper, the first weather station was at the home of Gerry Clarke. For a few years, he and his wife shared the job of taking all readings every three hours. It was a never-ending chore.



In 1924 Jenny & Harvey Church bought Gerry & Isobel Clarke's house (118 Connaught now 120 Connaught) and the weather job came with it. One of the superiors from the Edmonton office came to Jasper for three days to teach Jenny all she needed to know. She turned her dining room into an office/bedroom so she could hire someone to take the night readings.

The instruments used then were thermometers, two barometers, and a weather vane on top of the house.

She measured the rainfall in inches, and the snowfall had to be melted to get the reading.

There was no instrument for measuring the velocity of the wind. However, there happened to be some strings hanging from the porch eaves. Jenny's mentor showed her how far these strings would be moving if the wind was 25 miles/hour. She would do her estimations from that.

All reports were sent in code every six hours through the telegraph office, but the readings were made every three hours. During the war, the reports were sent more frequently.

When Jenny decided that this weather reporting was disrupting both her own and her young children's lives, she looked for a replacement. Vi Brooks (later Kohar) took it over and the instruments were moved to Mr. Gilmour's garage at 801 Patricia St.

At that time Freda Owens & Vivian Butler sometimes gave Vi a hand. Vivian became interested and stayed with the job for many years. In the meantime a weather station was set up in the upper floor of the fire hall and remained there for many years. Nettie Hale assisted Vivian.

A Stevenson Screen was set up across from the present elementary school. Nettie tells that they were required to walk from the Stevenson Screen to the hospital, taking snow measurements along the way and then averaging the measurements to determine the amount of snow that had fallen.

Russ Rowlandson was the weather man 1974 - 1995, with assistants, Al Timinsky and John Simichak.

When Harry Rowed built his new building at 610 Connaught, in 1975, the weather office was moved into one of the rooms upstairs.

The office machinery was a far cry from the crude instruments of the earlier type. Everything is done by computer, even the phone calls to report findings.

This weather office was closed in 1995. Weather readings are taken automatically at the site of the 6th Bridge Warden Compound.

Gary Hilworth took the weather vane off of the house at 120 Connaught Dr. in August 2015 as the house is slated for demolition. It will be given to the Accession Committee at the Museum.

Glenda Cornforth (Jenny's daughter) remembers that Jim Madori was clearing snow off the roof when he started to slide and grabbed the weather vane to catch himself and broke the tail off.

Additional information from Glenda Cornforth and Russ Rowlandson.

Sept. 8 2015



Hot Diggity Dog - Update!



The cart was purchased in April 2014 and we were able to pay off the cart plus make a bit of a profit the first summer. Gross sales in 2014 were \$6567.26 at 14 events.

This is now the second summer running the hotdog cart and for 2015 we have been able to raise \$7,210.60 for the Museum. (Sheila and AnnaMarie's bottle drives fund the supplies for the cart.) The cart was a part of Aboriginal Day, Canada Day & Farmer's Market. The hotdog cart actually had a following at the Farmer's Market and thank you to our regular customers. New this year was the Tour of Alberta, Sept 4 & 5 on the Information

Lawn. It was a cold 2 days but very profitable and exciting to be part of this event. Last event will be the Dark Sky Festival in October and then the cart will be put away in its warm and cozy shed for the winter.

Thank you to:

Cesar Argueta (Yellowhead Refrigeration) who donated his time and the parts; Sheila Couture, Tamar Couture, Joe Couture, Nash Hilworth, Sandra Naffin, Fred MacMillan, Sandy Birks, Reiko Oka, Janice and Wayne Kennedy for volunteering to run the cart; Lee Chorley (Rocky Mountain Roaster's) for donating the coffee, cups and beverage containers; Ornesto Tassoni (Sysco) for the donation of hotdogs for the Tour of Alberta.

If interested in volunteering to help run the hotdog cart please contact Anna Marie Couture at board@jaspermuseum.org or 780-852-2292.

(Canada Day beer gardens and BBQ volunteers raised about \$11,000, our biggest fundraiser, for the Historical Society. Many THANKS to our volunteers, supporters and coordinators!)

The Gift of Giving

An initiative we are working on, as originally reported in last Year's Spring Signal in an article by Chris Stolfa, is encouraging people to consider giving a portion of their estate to the JYHS in order to assist in long term survival and the furthering of Society goals and dreams. We hope to develop an informative campaign, and would like to know if anyone is interested in helping with this sensitive area—perhaps a senior member who is more in tune with those who might be inclined to participate.—though of course such a gift can be set up at any stage of life!

It is recommended that you inform the Jasper Yellowhead Historical Society of your donation either by letter or by providing them with a copy of the page of your will with your donation. If you are considering putting restrictions on the donation then you should talk to the Jasper Yellowhead Historical Society first to be sure that your restrictions can be accommodated. Please stay tuned for more information!



Museum Collection and Exhibits

Dee Dee Bartlett and Carla Slover

Dee Dee has worked for the Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives for over 20 years in the archive and artifact collection.

Donations to the Jasper Yellowhead Museum are all interesting and on a monthly basis an Accession Committee (Andy Klimach, Glenda Cornforth, Joe Couture, Dee-Dee Bartlett and Carla Slover) meet and pour over the items to decide on their acceptance into the archives. Over the past 3 months some of items accepted can vary from an NPC milk can, a bear regulation poster, colour slides, a dress hat, log boom chain, a chair and a pack box from Fred Brewster, a Jasper United Church cook book (to complete the Museum's set) and lots more! Some of the locals donating treasures have been Pat Bell, Joyce Butler, Bob Dowling, Al Brady and Diane Crayston. Many thanks to everyone who cherish our history!

Pat Bell continues to update our archives information files to help us keep track of that history.

Carla is heading towards completing her first year as the Exhibit Designer and Coordinator. From taking the museum presence to Parks Day to setting up the Cavell Centennial Exhibit in the Alcove Gallery, she is getting ready for the opening event of Cavell Exhibit on Saturday October 10. The Summer's Past exhibit continues in the Showcase Gallery with Sandy Robinson's donated prints selling well. Sandy's framed original watercolour painting of the 11th hole at the Jasper Park Lodge golf course will be raffled off on after the Summer's Past exhibit closes. The \$5 tickets are available at the museum or the JPL Gold Pro Shop. Thanks to Sandy for his continued support. Mini outings along the 300 block of Connaught Drive and a tour of the Astoria Hotel and the Parks Superintendent's home highlight the summer outings.



Carla and Dee Dee both work at saving our history and bringing it out in full view. Kudos to the team.

Lifetime Membership

- ◆ Lifetime Membership is \$500 per person with a tax receipt of \$500.
 - ◆ Lifetime Members would get the same entitlements as members, free unlimited museum admission, 10% off all purchases at the museum gift shop, the semi-annual newsletter, use of the member's library and invitations to special events.
 - ◆ Members will receive a special edition laminate life time membership card.
 - ◆ Life Time memberships can also be purchased as a gift & in memory of someone. They would make that perfect birthday, Christmas or anniversary gift for that person who just has everything.
- For more information or to purchase a Lifetime Membership, please contact any Board Member or email board@jaspermuseum.com

Remember all our other memberships are important! Please renew yours when it expires yearly!



CN Storage Container on the right track.

It continues to get better! Thanks to John Ogilvy's dedication! The container now has stairs and decks, a loading dock, doors and roll shutter. Welding and electrical work are next on the \$14,000 budget to add much needed dry storage space for the museum. Books, ducks, ladders and cabinets are moving in! A mini outing tour of the museum upgrades is soon planned. Watch for an email or check on the Jasper Museum page on Facebook.



Presidents Review

(Continued from page 1)

knows how many other charitable and community groups Joe was a part of. Let alone his earlier life and his round as a Town Councillor, or Marmot Ski School instructor/founder.

For the Jasper Yellowhead Historical Society, Joe has been our longstanding Historian. The Historian "shall be knowledgeable of the history and associated resources in the Jasper vicinity" and is charged with facilitating "... the understanding and appreciation of Jasper vicinity history to the JYHS and public". The Historian is an officer's position with the Board of Director's. In this role, Joe was instrumental in organizing volunteers and materials for many outings for the Membership and public, ensuring this vital component of our Society remained vibrant and evolving. Outings enjoyed by many included sites like

- ◆ the Market Garden at Pugh's, near the Miette Rive
- ◆ Milner's dairy location, near the East underpass
- ◆ the fur trade era bake oven and Japanese internment camp at Decoigne

Joe has also been our Finance Committee Chair, championing initiatives like the recent professional Review of our financial health, reflected in our Year End Financial Report. This Committee is also leading a review of our bookkeeping and accounting procedures, looking to recommend ways in which our Chart of Accounts might better reflect our organization's mandate.

A primary purpose of a Museum and Archives is to conserve and preserve artifacts and records of the community it serves. Joe was a long standing member of the Accessions Committee, and rarely missed a meeting where the purpose was to reflect on Jasper's past and how donated items might be included in the collection to tell this story.

Joe was also an accomplished burger flipper at Canada Day and elsewhere and he set the bar high for the selling of tickets such as those for the annual Duck Race.

Suffice it to say - Joe will be missed. Condolences to his family, and may we take comfort in the knowledge that Joe's example will inspire for many years to come.



Heritage Stewardship

Heritage Stewardship- Opportunities to Contribute are within your grasp!

Jasper National Park's volunteer scene is as wide and varied as the landscape itself. The options for would be Park Stewards are endless, with several great partners who look after the park's natural and cultural heritage when opportunities arise. In the past several years, Parks Canada Park Stewards have been involved in helping to take care of some of the park's important cultural heritage sites and in other cases, to help remediate them. We're always looking for a few more hands to help us on additional projects and happy to consider ideas if you have one you think that needs attention!

Pocahontas- flung far off to the park's east end, it's easy to forget that Jasper has coal mining roots as well as tourism, fur trading and railways. In the past three summers some of the park's Park Stewards and international volunteers have been taking the stewardship of this important area into their own hands. In 2013- volunteers opened up the Pocahontas Cemetery through an afternoon of handbrushing away tall Junipers, willows and wild rose that crowded out some of the gravesites. The area is now in respectable condition and remains so, with the help of volunteers and park staff who pay the occasional visit. In 2014, volunteers removed a significant amount of poplar and willow growth which was crowding out the lower Pocahontas mine loop. In 2015 (so far) a group of Junior Forest Wardens began work to open up the sightlines on the upper mine loop at Pocahontas and were quickly followed by international volunteers later in the summer.

JNP is dotted with many different historic locations, some of which could benefit from more hands-on volunteering. If you'd like to take part, including in some future outings we hope to offer together with the museum.

please email jasper.volunteers@pc.gc.ca!



Used Book Sales

Kudos to Margaret Maltby for a successful summer book sale! Her efforts sold about \$2600 worth of books. The ongoing book sale in Fred's Nook, cared for by Margaret and Roger, as well as the Jasper Activity Centre used book sales have brought in about \$900 so far this year. Enjoy your reading? We appreciate it as well.

Weekly Winter Coffee Hour

The Museum Tuesday Morning Coffee Hour returns on Tuesday November 3 at 1030 am.

Artifacts, stories, show and tell and fellowship bring the hour of Jasper's Past alive. And there are cookies! And you are welcome to join in!

50th Anniversary of our Canadian Flag

Museum Outreach Exhibit Display Case
Jasper Activity Centre Lobby...September 1 to November 30, 2015

Skiing in Jasper ...sliding in on December 1
Inquiries and ideas: Sheila Couture (780) 852-4949 Email: jns@incentre.net





Jasper-Yellowhead Museum & Archives

400 Bonhomme Street, Jasper, Alberta (across from the Jasper Aquatic Centre)

Summer Hours End Mon Oct 12.

Winter Hours Begin

Thursday Oct 15

Museum

Thursday to Sunday 10 am to 5 pm daily

Archives

Wednesdays

9 am - noon & 1-4 pm

Please phone for appointment

780-852-3240 archives

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www.jaspermuseum.org

Jasper Museum on Facebook

The museum reminds members by email or by Facebook for upcoming events. Talk to Andy if you wish to be reminded by phone.

Showcase Gallery

Frank Smythe exhibit (1st half of gallery) - now until Nov 15
Mountaineer Frank Smythe was famous for his Himalayan expeditions in the 1930s. He explored, climbed, photographed and wrote about the Rockies in the 1940s. This exhibition looks at his achievements then and his continuing relevance today.

Summers Past (2nd half of gallery) May 25 - Oct 12

This exhibit contains three components. It celebrates the 75th anniversary of the Icefield Parkway, the 90th anniversary of the Golf Course and incorporates summer activities enjoyed by locals and visitors year after year. You'll even get to see golf treasures on loan from private collections.

War Exhibit (2nd half of gallery) Oct 22 - Nov 15

A commemorative exhibit set up in time for Remembrance Day. It honors the efforts and memories of all those involved. Hand sculpted Dioramas by Z.O. depicting World War 1. Each diorama captures a different year of the 5 year war.

Festival of Trees (FoT) (whole gallery) Nov 26 - Dec 20

What happens when people's enthusiasm for the museum, incredible creativity and holiday spirit collide? That's the festival of trees! A Wine and Cheese Celebration will again be a part of the FoT.

Local Artists January 1 to Spring Thaw.

Various local artists, from our vibrant and thriving art community, in a variety of mediums, will be showcased beginning in January.

Alcove Gallery

Edith Cavell Centennial Sept 12 - January 31, 2016

Join the celebration of the 100 year anniversary of Edith Cavell. This exhibit will include the history of Edith Cavell and Ron Brown's black and white images of the mountain that bears her name. A wine and cheese opening on Saturday October 10 from 6 to 9 pm will feature a one woman show on Edith.