



Heritage News

Discover Crowsnest Heritage

JUNE 2010
ISSUE #2

MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER
JUNE 15 2010

WELCOME

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Nez Perce Creek
by
Ian McKenzie
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This month is the 96th anniversary of the Hillcrest Mine Disaster. On Friday June 19th, 1914, two, possibly three explosions ripped through Hillcrest Mines Number One and Two killing 189 men. It is Canada's worst mining disaster.

The Frank Slide Centre will be running guided tours of Hillcrest and the Hillcrest Cemetery on Saturday, June 19th. The tours will include a visit to the newly completed Hillcrest Mine Disaster Interpretive Walkway and the Hillcrest Mine Disaster Memorial Monument. Special audio-visual and interpretive presentations will take place at the Centre throughout the day. The tours will leave from the Centre at 1:00 and 3:00 pm and last approximately 1 ½ hours. 403-562-7388

Musically commemorating the men who died in the disaster, James Keelaghan wrote the song "Hillcrest Mine." If you wish to read more about what happened, read Frank W. Anderson's "Canada's Worst Mine Disaster," Frontier Books No. 18 1969, republished by Heritage House Company of Surrey BC in 1980.

EDITOR: Claire Allum

WHAT'S ON

BELLEVUE AND HILLCREST

BELLECREST DAYS: Friday, June 18th and Saturday, June 19th.

A celebration of the Bellevue and Hillcrest communities. The festival's date coincides with the Hillcrest Mine Disaster of June 19th, 1914.

FRIDAY Common Street Dance on Main Street in front of the Bellevue Inn.
Fireworks at 11:00 pm at the MD McEachern Community Centre.

SATURDAY Bellevue Legion pancake breakfast from 8:00-10:00am.
Bellevue Seniors' Centre book, bake and garage sale from 9:00 am-2:00 pm.
Downtown Parade starts at 11:00 am.
Bellevue Areana Memorial Park: For children, free hotdogs and pop 12:00-1:00 pm, Astro Jump, Petting Zoo, Sidewalk Painting and Face Painting.
The Old Dairy Ice Cream Shoppe: Kid's ice cream eating contest 2:00-4:00 pm.

CROWSNEST HERITAGE INITIATIVE

The Crowsnest Heritage Initiative proposed signage texts will be appearing in both the Crowsnest Pass Promoter and Crowsnest Pass Herald newspapers. Please don't hesitate to comment on them to the committee, especially if you have information to contribute on their topics.

FRANK SLIDE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE

Frank 403-562-7388



UPCOMING EVENTS:

96th Anniversary of the Hillcrest Mine Disaster. See "Welcome" above.
Doors Open: **Friday, July 30th to Monday, August 2nd.**
Alberta Arts Days: **Friday, September 17th to Sunday, September 19th.**

BELLEVUE UNDERGROUND MINE

Bellevue 403-564-4700



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Bellecrest Days: **Friday, June 18th to Saturday, June 19th.**
Doors Open, Miners' Memorial: **Sunday, August 1st.**
Antique Appraisals with Sheldon Smithens: **Sunday, August 1st.**
Halloween Howler, **Sunday, October 31st.**



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Doors Open, Teddy Bear's Picnic: **Saturday, July 31st.**Harvest of Memories Fall Festival: **Saturday, September 25th.**

COLEMAN LEGION

CANADA DAY CELEBRATIONS: **Thursday, July 1st**

Enjoy an old fashioned pancake breakfast at the Coleman Legion followed by a traditional main street parade.

THANK YOU

The Heritage Signage Committee would like to thank **Vince Anderson**, proprietor of **Alberta Rocks Ltd.**, for his generous donation of gravel and bobcat work in the landscaping around our Crow's Nest Pass Heritage Driving Route signs. The bobcat and fleet of trucks enabled significant progress towards our goal of professionally landscaping the signage, which was a winner of a Chinook Country Tourism Award for best New Idea/Product in 2009. Thank you Vince!

FEATURED ARTICLE

NEZ PERCE CREEK by Ian McKenzie

The book *Hiking the Historic Crow's Nest Pass* suggests that Deadman Pass is named after the ambush of 40 US cavalrymen there. This is extremely unlikely, but the story may be a misplaced echo of events relevant to the naming of Nez Perce Creek in Coleman. There are a few out-of-place native names in the Pass – Tecumseh, Mohawk – but Nez Perce Creek reminds us of events in the United States involving a First Nations band and the US Cavalry that ended not far from Crow's Nest Pass.

The Nez Perce (Nimiipuu) were a loose confederation of several bands, each with their own chief, living in the area where Washington, Oregon and Idaho meet. Resistance to moving onto a government reservation and clashes with white settlers prompted the US Army to move in, and in June 1877 a group of about 800 Nez Perce with 2000 horses headed roughly east towards their Crow allies on the Montana plains. They were pursued by the US Army for 2,750km including crossing the 3350m high Beartooth Pass. Despite having only about 200 warrior-aged men in the group, the Nez Perce bands held off or outright defeated their pursuers in battles at White Bird Canyon, Cottonwood, Clearwater, Big Hole, Camas Meadows, Canyon Creek and Bear Paw.

At some point the Nez Perce decided to head to Canada. A year earlier Sitting Bull had defeated General Custer's 7th Cavalry at Little Bighorn, and had himself fled to Fort Walsh, Saskatchewan. After the battle at Bear Paw just 80km from the Canadian border, the Nez Perce surrendered their sick, aged and exhausted to the US Army, while Chief White Bird and about 200 followers including most of the remaining warriors slipped away under cover of night, and succeeded in linking up with Sitting Bull in Canada.

The Nez Perce camped at the east end of the Cypress Hills, but many gradually went back south. After Sitting Bull and his Sioux returned to the United States in 1881, the remaining Nez Perce in Canada migrated towards Fort Macleod and eventually settled with their Peigan (Piikani) relatives near Bocket, probably around 1890 or 1892.

The name 'Nez Perce Creek' first shows up on maps in 1902, the year before Coleman was established. It may have been named by the CPR when they bridged it in 1898 – their construction crews would have passed by Bocket just the year before, when the Nez Perce story was only twenty years old. The creek could also have been named by earlier railway surveyors, timber prospectors or cowboys.

The story of the Nez Perce is significant enough for the United States government to have created the unconventional Nez Perce National Historic Park (38 sites scattered across four states) in 1965 and the Nez Perce National Historic Trail in 1986. Here in the Crow's Nest Pass, our Nez Perce Creek is a small acknowledgement of the heroic 2,750 kilometre escape of 1877 that ended in Bocket, just a few tens of kilometers east of us.

100 YEARS AGO

- June 6th: Town Municipality of Coleman was incorporated. Coleman's first mayor was Alex Cameron and the councilors were: Samuel Shone, J.O.C. McDonald, R. Holmes, H.W. Clark, Alex Morrison and Henry James. The month before, on May 10th, Mr. A.C. Flumerfelt had donated Coleman's Park.
- During the summer, McGillivray Creek Coal and Coke Company completed its first tipple in Coleman.
- 1910 was the first year of production for the Davenport Coal Company in Burmis.
- It was a hot summer and there were devastating fires in western Alberta. Timber losses were extensive and the Peter McLaren Lumber Company lost a great deal of its forest reserve.
- Internationally, King Edward VII of Great Britain died on May 6th of bronchitis and pneumonia and was succeeded on May 9th by George V.



Nez Perce Warrior c. 1910 Edward S. Curtis (public domain)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

CROWSNEST MUSEUM

The Crowsnest Museum needs volunteers for a number of special events and to keep the museum open during its extended summer hours.

EVENTS: Teddy Bears' Picnic, Saturday, July 31st
 Harvest of Memories, Saturday, September 25th

Whether you can volunteer for one event or have the time to work a few hours each week, all help is gratefully received. Jobs at the museum include accessioning artifacts, scanning photographs, manning the gift shop, leading tours and working with school groups. Please contact Don Harvey (403-582-0141), Stephanie Laine-Hamilton (403-562-8435 especially if interested in working with tour groups or educational programs), Wendy Zack at the Museum (403-563-5434).

GARDENING/LANDSCAPING ENTHUSIASTS

Want to show off your gardening skills but don't have a garden? Have extra seedlings you need a home for? Like to get together with friends in the sun? The Crowsnest Museum grounds need landscaping and garden maintenance. Please contact Wendy Zack at the Museum (403-563-5434) if you and your friends are interested in working on a garden project.

RUM RUNNER DAYS

Thursday, July 15th to Sunday, July 18th. Volunteers are needed for the organizing committee. Please e-mail marion@rumrunnerdays.com if you are interested.

UPDATES

CROWSNEST HERITAGE INITIATIVE

The Crowsnest Heritage Initiative is an umbrella organization with many members representing other Crowsnest heritage groups such as the Crowsnest Historical Society, the EcoTrust Museum, the Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, the Coleman Seniors' Association and the Hillcrest Memorial Cemetery Committee as well as members of the public. Its primary function is the initiation and coordination of heritage projects implemented by subcommittees of interested individuals and partner organizations. Here are some updates on ongoing projects:

CROWSNEST HERITAGE SIGNAGE PROJECT

More heritage signs are planned for Crowsnest Pass. The signage committee is raising money, writing texts and selecting photographs. This spring they will replace and repair damaged signs along the Crowsnest Heritage Driving Route as well as continue landscaping around historic information signage already in place. Crowsnest Heritage Driving Route maps are available at many local Crowsnest Pass businesses. Look for the Crowsnest Heritage Driving Route logo in their windows. The Crowsnest Heritage Initiative proposed signage texts will be appearing in both the Crowsnest Pass Promoter and Crowsnest Pass Herald newspapers. Please don't hesitate to comment on them to the committee, especially if you have information to contribute on their topics.

ALBERTA PROVINCIAL POLICE BARRACKS BUILDING RESTORATION PROJECT

The Alberta Provincial Police barracks were purchased by the Crowsnest Historical Society in 2002. In 2009 the building was moved so that a solid foundation could be built underneath it. Money is being raised for the building's restoration, the second phase of the project.

COLEMAN MINER'S UNION HOSPITAL RESTORATION PROJECT

The old hospital is now the Coleman Seniors Drop-In Centre. Last year new windows were installed that more closely resemble ones that the building had in the early 20th century.

WEB LINKS

Crowsnest Heritage Initiative: <http://crowsnestheritage.ca/CHI.html>

Crowsnest Heritage Driving Tours: http://www.crowsnestheritage.ca/Driving_tours.htm

Crowsnest Museum: <http://www.crowsnestmuseum.ca>

Bellevue Underground Mine: <http://www.bellevueundergroundmine.org/aboutus.htm>

Frank Slide Interpretive Centre: <http://www.frankslide.com>

Rum Runner Days: <http://rumrunnerdays.com>

Heritage Canada Foundation's Top Ten Most Endangered Places List (includes Crowsnest Pass Mining Complexes): http://www.heritagecanada.org/eng/Top_Ten_Backgrounder_2009_E.pdf

The Virtual Crowsnest Highway (great fun, some errors): <http://www.crowsnest-highway.ca/index.htm>

GIVE TO A FRIEND

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