

HERITAGE VIEWS

History and Heritage in Crowsnest Pass, Alberta



Issue 71

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Along with the 125th anniversary of the CPR in Crowsnest Pass, this year we celebrate Michael Phillipps' traverse from the Elk Valley into our Crowsnest Pass district, 150 years ago. Phillipps is a much better known person in Fernie and the Grasmere district than he is here, mostly I think because we limit our research and vision to the Alberta side of the Pass. We might excuse ourselves because of the vast quantity of historical data which exists on the Alberta side, leaving the BC side to historical societies in Sparwood, Fernie, and elsewhere, but in doing so we certainly short-change ourselves and end up with a chopped-off view of Pass history.

Michael Phillipps was a fascinating character, and a good overview of his interesting and varied life can be discovered with a simple Google search.

- Ian McKenzie

On the cover: Members of the Blais family (Bella, Alva, and Lilly) share a lighter moment at their store in Frank, date unknown but possibly around 1915. That store still exists today, as the Frank Slide Liquor store.

Photo: courtesy of the Blais family

Heritage Views is a publication of the Crowsnest Heritage Initiative. We are a cooperative committee of local heritage organizations and interested individuals who seek to promote the understanding and appreciation of heritage within the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass, Alberta. For more information on who we are and what we do, click here: <http://www.crowsnestheritage.ca/crowsnest-heritage-initiative/>

This issue was edited and produced by Ian McKenzie and proofread by Isabel Russell and Ken Allred. Inquiries, comments or submissions can be sent to heritageviews.cnp@gmail.com. Future contributors should send in their articles in MS Word or something similar, with any photos sent as separate jpeg files. Do not embed photos into your document; we will just have to strip them out and reinsert them into our newsletter format.

Back issues of this free online publication are available at www.crowsnestheritage.ca by clicking on the "newsletter" link on the home page.

Local Heritage News

The upcoming **Doors Open and Heritage Festival** will be themed on the Pass' many historic links to the wider world, including the 125th anniversary of the completion of the CPR's Crow's Nest Line and the 150th anniversary of Michael Phillipps' crossing of the Continental Divide into the Crowsnest Pass area. See www.cnpheritagefest.ca for festival events and schedules.

Several members of the Pass heritage community received the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal**. Seven thousand of these Canada-wide commemorative medals were issued to worthy Albertans, each a significant contributor to their community. <https://www.abmunis.ca/about-us/queens-platinum-jubilee-medal>

The 1910 **Hillcrest United Church** received new roof shingles in January, an important life-extender for any heritage building.

The annual general meeting of the **Crowsnest Historical Society** is on May 28th, 2pm, at Country Encounters. The Society turns 50 years old this year. Guest speaker Dr. Frits Pannekoek will reveal his new online Alberta history project.



Blairmore Enterprise, January 5, 1922

The 120th anniversary of the **Frank Slide** was recognized on April 29th, and received significant media coverage. An outdoor service was followed by a reception at the **Frank Slide Interpretive Centre**.

This spring is also the 100th anniversary of extensive flooding in the Crowsnest Pass. The **1923 flood** is one of the best known, but significant flooding also occurred in 1902, 1908, 1942, and 1995. You can read about these floods in our issue #31; all of our back-issues are available through <https://www.crowsnestheritage.ca/archives>.

Did You Know...

... that Michael Phillipps worked for the Hudson Bay company as factor at Fort Kootenay until 1869, and later was Indian Agent for the area?

... that he was married to Rowena, daughter of Chief David of the Tobacco Plains band?

... that the Phillipps homestead was near Grasmere, south of Elko, and that Michael and Rowena are buried in the Roosville Cemetery?

... that in 2015 the Michael Phillipps papers were donated to the K'tunaxa Nation Council Archives in Cranbrook, after a forest fire had threatened the old Phillipps homestead?

The Alva Isaac Blais Family

by Margaret Blais

The Alva Isaac Blais family roots in Canada stretch back into the 1600s, starting in Quebec. Gradually the family migrated from the L'Assomption area of Quebec into the township of Clarence in the county of Russell in Ontario, where Alva Isaac was born in 1863. He went to work in Wales, Stormont County, Ontario as a bookkeeper and there met and married Isabella (Bella) Frances Miller. Their four oldest children, Lillian (Lilly) Louisa, Ernest (Ernie) Edwin, Alva (Allie) Erskine, and Harold Everett, were born there. In 1901, the family moved to White River, Ontario where two more children were born, a stillborn baby and Reginald (Reggie) Robert. Alva managed a store there until he moved his family to Banff, Alberta in the spring of 1906, where Archibald (Archie) Walter was born.

In June of 1908, the family relocated to Frank, Alberta where Alva Isaac took over the Co-Operative Company store on the south side of the tracks.



Alva Isaac Blais in front of the 1908 store. Photo courtesy of the Blais family.



Probable store location in the old Frank townsite. Photo: Crowsnest Museum and Archives, CM-FR-32-05



Alva Isaac and his daughter Lilly, serving store customers ca. 1910. Photo courtesy of the Blais family.

Early in December of 1913, a fire caused considerable damage to the stock, while the store was slightly scorched. This fire led to the decision to build a new store on the north side of the tracks, which opened in June of 1914. During that interval, A.I. arranged for all orders to be filled from his Bellevue store so there would be no interruption of service. (Alva took over the

stock and business of J.J. Raynor in Bellevue in early 1912, and owned this business until he sold to Haddad Brothers in April, 1915.)



A.I. Blais and Archie at the new Frank store, ca. 1914. Photo courtesy of the Blais family.



The restored store as it appeared in 2015 (Frank Slide Liquor store). Photo by Margaret Blais.

During their time in Frank, the family was very civic minded and involved themselves in numerous organizations and activities, and enjoyed spending their down-time fishing in the North Fork. Alva Isaac started one of the first libraries there by loaning out his books to others. He was secretary-treasurer of the Crow's Nest Pass hockey league, a juryman on several inquests, a delegate for the Knox Methodist church to district meetings, chairman of Conservative party meetings, Commissioner of Oaths, and

even served on the School Board (which helped to keep his boys in line, while they were in school 😊). Bella was involved in numerous women's groups and active in the church while in Frank.

As a young girl, Lilly played hockey and entertained the community with piano duets with a friend. After taking a business course in Edmonton in 1915, Lilly returned to Frank to work in the Union Bank until she married Harry Sutherland in June 1919.

Ernie was the assistant in the public school, which had 90 students, before going to war in 1915. In 1917 he made the supreme sacrifice, killed in action by a sniper's bullet. His body is buried at Villers Station Cemetery, Villers-Au-Bois, France.

Ernie Blais served as a Private with the Canadian Infantry, Manitoba Regiment, 8th Battalion (Royal Winnipeg Rifles).

Photo courtesy of the Blais family.



Allie initially worked for his dad, making deliveries from the Bellevue store. From 1920 to 1927 he ran his own business in Frank, doing painting, wallpapering, and kalsomining, decorating businesses such as the Blairmore Grocery.



Alva Isaac Blais family in Frank, AB – left to right, Allie, Harold, Alva, Lilly, Isabella, Ernie, and down front Archie. Photo courtesy of the Blais family.

Harold joined the N.W.M.P. in 1919, but left in 1921 to get married. (Members could not marry during their first seven years.)

Archie joined the Canadian Pacific Railway at age 17 and worked as a fireman and then engineer, for 48 years. By 1927, Archie, Allie, and Harold were all working for the CPR and living in Lethbridge.



Archie, Bella, Allie, and Alva, ca. 1928 in Lethbridge. Photo courtesy of the Blais family.

Alva Isaac remained in business in Frank until 1927, when he was forced to sell out and retire to Lethbridge after suffering a severe heart attack. He never recovered his health and died on January 15, 1929. Bella lived with her sons, Allie and Archie, until her death exactly 10 years after Alva.

(This article owes much to the input and assistance of Marcella Blais, Helen St. Onge, and particularly Betty Sutherland who began researching our family in the 1960s.)

The Century Home Club

Address: 13333 21 Avenue,
Blairmore

Year built: either 1901 or 1908;
moved from Frank in 1921.

Features: Enclosed front entry is a relatively recent addition.

Known occupants: Rev. W. T. Young and family, 1921 to 1927.



W. T. Young residence (centre) during the 1923 flood. All four buildings in the photo still exist. Photo: Crowsnest Museum and Archives

Our Two “#1” Railway Artifacts

by Ian McKenzie

The Story of Old Maude, Engine #1

An ageing and shabby locomotive sits across from the Blairmore post office. A heritage sign tells most of its story, but not all.

This Mogul class steam locomotive, bearing builder's number 1245, was constructed by the Canadian Locomotive Company of Kingston, Ontario. It was sold to the City of Winnipeg Light and Power Department (City of Winnipeg Hydro) in April 1914 and was designated by them as locomotive #2, but was called the Star or White Star as it bore a white star on the number plate on its nose. Just two months later, at 7am on June 30 1914, it crashed through the Lac du Bonnet bridge into the Winnipeg River, drowning its

engineer. The 1906 wood bridge had been designed for loads up to about 90 tons, but the new locomotive weighed over 120 tons.¹

The wrecked White Star was partially disassembled and pulled from the river, and was probably repaired in Winnipeg. As it was clearly not suited for travel across the repaired bridge, it was sold to the Greater Winnipeg Water District Railway² on October 1916 and renumbered #11.

In November 1920 the GWWDR sold the locomotive to Hillcrest Collieries, to replace their older engine. Dubbed “Old Maude”³ by her crew, the engine moved coal between the tipple and the Canadian Pacific Railway main line. With the closure of the



White Star in the Winnipeg River, 1914.

Photo: Carl Hansen collection, The Vintage Locomotive Society

mine at Hillcrest in 1939, Old Maude was sold to West Canadian Collieries for similar work at the Greenhill Mine. At some point the number plate was altered from “11” to “1”, either by Hillcrest or West Canadian, by the simple expedient of removing one of the digits from its “11” number plate. You can see today that the “1” on the number plate is not centred.



When Greenhill closed in 1961, Old Maude was destined for salvage. But in 1964, local citizens and businessmen banded together to purchase Old Maude and save her from the scrap heap. In 1967, as part of a Canada Centennial project, Old Maude was moved to her present location along 20th Avenue, towed down the rails by Drain Brothers tractors. Subsequent work was done to cosmetically restore the old locomotive.

Time took its toll on Old Maude, and attempts by the Crowsnest Heritage Initiative in 2014 to find volunteers to work on her were unsuccessful. In 2020 the municipality received an offer from the South Ontario Locomotive Restoration Society to return Old Maude to operating condition, but to be displayed and run in Ontario. Council rejected that offer and indicated support for cosmetic repairs to our last artifact of the steam railway age.

Old Maude in Blairmore, about 1960. Note the off-centred digit on the nose plate. Photo: Crowsnest Museum and Archives, 8215 Gushul neg

Footnotes

1. The bridge was repaired and operated until 1931 but, for safety reasons, future trains disembarked their passengers and crew to walk across the bridge while the unmanned train steamed slowly across the bridge on its own!
2. The GWWDR was created to assist the construction of an aqueduct into Winnipeg, but after its completion the railway provided freight and passenger service in the area, and continues in operation today.
3. Some historians maintain that the name “Maud” or Maude” belonged to the older engine, and not its 1920 replacement.

References

Hydro Wreck in The Journal Box, newsletter of The Vintage Locomotive Society, Summer 2009.

<http://ldbheritage.ca/locomotive-2-pointe-du-bois-tramway/>

<http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/pageant/22/bridgethatwas.shtml>

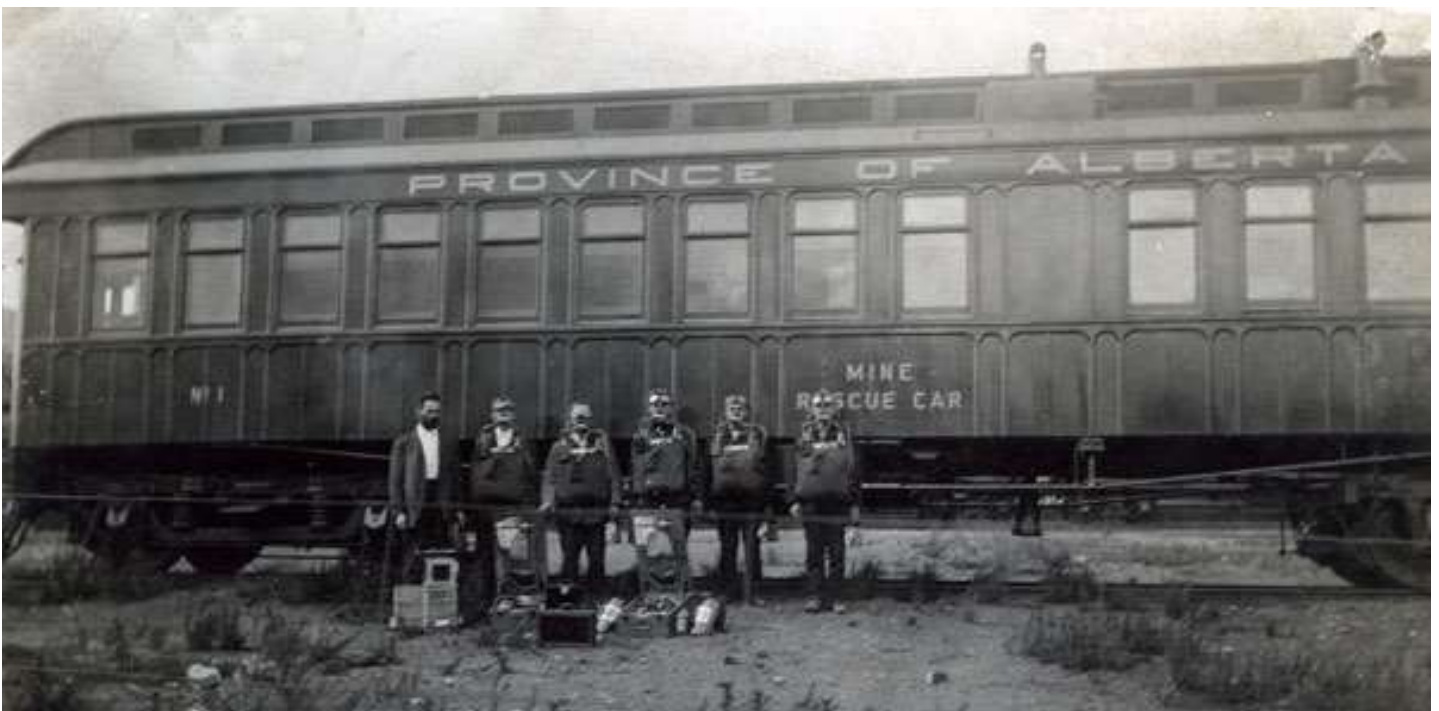
The Story of Rescue Car #1

Two prototype passenger coaches were built for the CPR by Harlan & Hollingsworth in 1882. Car #52 (the other prototype was #54) was used in western Canada from 1899 as a first-class (long distance) coach, and around 1912 as a second-class (local) coach, renumbered #1816.

In 1913, #52/#1816 was sold to the Province of Alberta for use as a mobile mine rescue facility, designated #1. This training and

Then this old rail car sat abandoned and vandalized for over twenty years.

Interest from CPR officials, the Alberta Pioneer Railway Association, and the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel in Cranbrook in the late 1970s was accelerated with the pending realignment of Highway 3 to the north of Blairmore.¹ Heritage Park in Calgary offered an emergency temporary site for the rail car, which was moved there by Drain Brothers in February 1983 just as highway construction neared the car site.



Mine Rescue Car #1, date unknown. Photo: Crowsnest Museum and Archives CM-CP-24-05

rescue command centre saw service on both sides of the Pass until 1935 (or possibly 1938), when it was sold to West Canadian Collieries. West Canadian removed its trucks and placed it on a foundation, and its exterior was stuccoed and its interior modified to serve as the assay office at the Greenhill Mine, until coal production ended in 1957.

Then it was moved again in 1984 to the Ridley Hill Car Shops in southeast Calgary where further assessment and cleanup work commenced. Car 52² now resides at the Canadian Museum of Rail Travel (now called the Cranbrook History Centre), awaiting restoration back to its original passenger coach configuration. It is believed to be the oldest CPR coach in existence.



Former Greenhill Mine assay office, as it appeared in the late 1970s. Photo: Crowsnest Museum and Archives, 003 David Blume Collection

Footnotes

1. Some claim that the car was “hijacked” before local forces could arrange its move to the Crowsnest Museum.
2. It was originally thought to be Car 54, the other prototype, until restoration work indicated it was actually Car 52. This explains why the references below all erroneously refer to Car 54.

References

Oldest Coach Rescued in Nick of Time, CP Rail News, Vol 13 No 5, April 1983. This edition can be found at <http://www.okthepk.ca/dataCprSiding/cprNews/cpNews30/83040601.htm>

The Rescue of Car 54[sic], Canadian Rail no 378, January-February 1984. Includes interesting photos of the old car.

A Poultry Matter, Canadian Rail no 384, January-February 1985. Includes more photos.

Canadian Rail is a publication of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association. Back issues of Canadian Rail from 1937 onwards are at <https://archives.exporail.org/index/>

Some Car 54[sic] info is in the February 23, 1983 edition of the *Crowsnest Promoter*.

Interior view of Rescue Car #1. Photo: Crowsnest Museum and Archives, 60432 Gushul glass negative



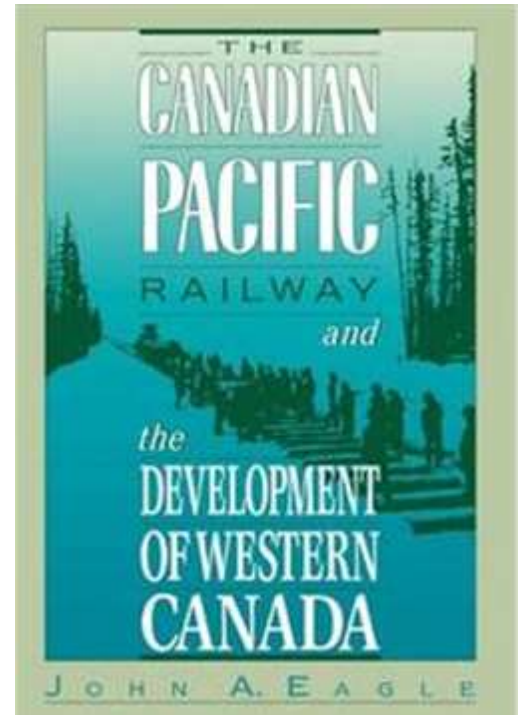
Book Review

The Canadian Pacific Railway and the Development of Western Canada by John A. Eagle (1989)

Review by Ian McKenzie

Much has been written about the romantic, nation-building CPR mainline, completed in 1885. By comparison, other major rail line constructions have been poor cousins, receiving only a paragraph or two in longer works. This book, however, concentrates on CPR activities between 1896 and 1914, when the Crow's Nest Line was their principal construction and business expansion.

Eagle deals thoroughly with the political and functional aspects of the railway charters, including the famous "Crow Rate," issues which were more complex than you might think. In my view, not enough ink was dedicated to the actual physical construction of the line, but admittedly this sort of detail would have limited appeal to many readers. There is significant attention paid to non-Crowsnest subjects, if I can put it that way, including fascinating biographies of key CPR executives, information on politics and the company's financial situation up to about 1890, a study of the land grants which accompanied the rail charters and how the CPR was able to profit from them, the development of the chain of CPR hotels, the comfort of rail travelers, development of natural resources, and CPR urban policy. While these might not attract the eye of readers strictly interested in Crowsnest Pass, they are nevertheless engaging topics to railway fans (and who secretly isn't one?).



This is one of the best sources of information on the early days of the Crow's Nest Line. If paired with a reading of Andy den Otter's essay *Bondage of Steam* (see our review of *The CPR West* in issue #70), one gets a pretty good picture of the CPR's early interface with our beloved Crowsnest Pass.

As this is an older book, you might try looking for it in used book stores, although your local public library should certainly be able to bring in a copy. It is worth the time to hunt down and spend a few evenings with.

Oral history

Michael Phillipps (1840-1916), In His Own Words

Excerpts from *Memories of 30 Years Ago* by Michael Phillipps, about 1905

. . . It was in the fall of 1873 that I paid my first visit to the upper waters of Elk River. It was no easy task getting into the country as there was no vestige of trail, save those made by the Elk, until what is now known as Michel Creek was reached. My sole companion, John Collins, was a trapper and cared little for prospecting, and as the formation of the country, however promising for coal, was very discouraging to the gold hunter, our trip soon became a hunting and trapping expedition. The water in the river was low and using the gravel bars and sloughs, by crossing and re-crossing the river, we got along fairly well with our four horses. We always camped about 3 o'clock, to give time to set our beaver traps before night. Camping out in fine weather and on a fine stream like Elk River is delightful. My companion was a good cook and liked it, but was hard to get out of bed in the morning. I often returned from looking at the traps, or hunting up the horses wet to the skin with the heavy dew, to find my companion still in bed . . .



Michael Phillipps, ca. 1905 BC Archives

Passing the hot springs and getting on to the prairie near the mouth of Michel Creek, I told Collins I thought I had been there before. I had in the sixties crossed over the high range from White River, a large tributary of the Kootenay River, with Pete Boyle, who still lives near Fort Steele. We had no idea that the large river we struck was what is now known as Elk River, but supposed that its course was east. We had prospected north towards the head of the river. After looking round I found the place where Boyle and I had camped some years before.

Collins and I decided to follow up Michel Creek and after some days travel through timber, were surprised to find large trails

that certainly were not Elk trails passing out towards the lake. We found the trees covered with buffalo hair and it was evident to both of us that we had passed through the Rocky Mountains without going over any range. This certainly was the first trip ever made by what is now known as the Crow's Nest Pass [via Phillipps Pass]. I saw at once the advantage of a pass through the great

Rocky Range without a mountain to go over and I determined to work for a trail . . .

Collins and I determined to return by the South Boundary Pass, sooner than work our way back through the timber. There was some risk about it, as there was then no Fort MacLeod and no Mounted Police. The Bloods and the Blackfeet ruled on the plains east of the mountains and they scalped all they came across. The Buffalo herds were far out on the plains at that time of year and the Blackfeet would not be far from them. We kept well inside the Porcupine Hills and along the Foothills until we came to Kootenay Pass . . .

The summer following I tried hard to get the B. C. Government to make a trail up Elk River and through the range. The Mounted Police had come into the North West through U.S. territory and established themselves at Fort MacLeod. We were anxious to get a market for cattle, as the mines at White Horse had gone down to a low ebb. Thanks to Mr. Galbraith, who was then our Member for Kootenay, the Provincial Government voted a small sum to define the trail. I had before sent Dr. Dawson a sample of the coal and a rough pen sketch of the Elk River and the Pass. This sketch he made use of in his book, using the names I put down, and some of which still remain, as Coal Creek, Morrissey Creek, etc. It was sometime before anything was done, as Mr. William Fernie, the Gold Commissioner, opposed the matter, saying the Indians say there was no such pass and that there was no use wasting money. I, however, in company with a Mr. Ridgeway,

blazed the road through and the trail was made. Until the opening up of the main line of the Canadian Pacific, it was during the summer months one of the most used trails in the country, bands of horses and cattle going over from even as far away as Kamloops.

Editor's Note: It is probable that this pass was used by indigenous people centuries before Phillipps and Collins crossed it.

Sign of the Times

The Crowsnest Heritage Initiative has installed four information kiosks, about fifty signs, and over a hundred building plaques, each revealing a small piece of our diverse history.

There is a sign panel cross from the Blairmore post office, in front of the old steam locomotive.



Have you read it?

Phillipps Pass

The oft-misspelled Phillipps Pass is between Crowsnest Ridge and Mount Tecumseh and straddles the provincial boundary. It may have been an important trade route for the ancestors of the K'tunaxa and other indigenous folks long, long before Michael Phillipps crossed it in 1873. Perhaps it should be called K'tunaxa Pass. Anyway, Phillipps Pass figures large in the recorded history of the area, being used by the North West Mounted Police leaving Fort Steele in 1888, by CPR supply wagons in 1897-98, by Wilby and Haney in 1912 on their coast-to-coast drive, and by rumrunners in the 1920s. The road from Phillipps Pass into Coleman was surveyed in 1909 (Plan 2443AZ); remnants of this roadbed vary from indistinct tracks to grassy raised roadbeds to the present-day Willow Drive. I've walked most of it, but some is on private land including the driveway in front of the JK Ranch (Jean Kerr) house. The Phillipps Pass portion was bypassed when a gravelled road was blasted around Crowsnest Lake in 1921.

To avoid private land, most hikers access Phillipps Pass from the BC side, starting at the Crowsnest Provincial Park day-use area off Highway 3 at the base of the big hill dropping from the Continental Divide. Start from the parking lot and walk to the nearby pipeline cut, and turn right (east). Quadders can make parts of the 3km route somewhat churned up and muddy, so make sure you have good footwear. And don't take the right-hand branch a couple hundred metres

from the trailhead; this follows a utility right of way to Island Lake (dreamers like me imagine this to be the original track to Andy Good's Summit Inn, from the 1890s). Generally stick to the valley bottom and you will be alright. After about a kilometre you pick up the rough road that originates near the highway weigh scales.

The hiking is not terribly scenic, but there are some interesting things along the way. For climbers, it is an approach route for summitting Mt. Tecumseh or its more challenging Phillipps Peak. There is a small, circular, sinking lake at the pass summit. But the best thing is the old cable car once used to service the microwave tower on the crest of Crowsnest Ridge. The old ruined gondola car remains, sitting on the ground. A great view can be had by hiking up the road from near the pond up to the tower.



Return the way you came. I know that some people access Phillipps Pass from the Alberta side, risking confrontation from landowners or the CPR. In my experience, landowners are more than happy to give permission for respectful, non-motorized hikers to cross their property, but you do have to ask. But the Alberta side is no more scenic than the BC side.

News, 100 Years Ago

In the spring of 1923, the towns and village of Crowsnest Pass suffered some of the worst flooding on record. The May 31 edition of the *Blairmore Enterprise* tells the story:

THE PASS IN FLOODS

For the past twenty-four hours the Pass has experienced a continuous rainstorm resulting in extremely high water and considerable damage. Early this morning rivers began to rise and in a few hours were overflowing their banks. At Coleman, particularly in what is known as Bush Town, all homes were surrounded by water and quite a number of smaller buildings were swept away from their foundations. Lyon Creek, at Blairmore, early started on its old-time pranks and was soon travelling over prohibitive territory. Many gardens throughout the Pelletier Addition were swept away, several small buildings were upturned, while logs trees and stumps swept down in a great mass. The C.P.R. bridge stood the test well, as also did the home-made bridge across State St., but the new "government" bridge on Victoria Street soon became undermined and collapsed. This bridge was completed last fall by an outside contractor on plans submitted and approved by the department of public works, as a cost of nearly four thousand dollars. The bridge was of cement construction, reinforced with steel. Contractor Pozzi was an unsuccessful bidder for the job.

The waters from Lyon Creek took a course straight across town, and for a time it was

feared that many people would have to leave their homes for higher levels, but early in the afternoon the floods subsided and by nightfall all danger from this creek had passed.

The Old Man River was also on the rampage, but locally did little damage. Along the Bellevue flats considerable damage was done, particularly to small buildings.

Gold Creek, at Frank, caused considerable worry, and the C.P.R. were obliged to use scores of shots of dynamite to keep the way for the torrents clear. Great masses of trees and stumps are piled high on both sides of the railroad at this point, and the road was soon in an impassable condition. The morning westbound train had to stall near Hillcrest and not likely to get through here for a day or two.

It is estimated that the damage to roads and bridges within the town limits of Blairmore will amount to about \$10,000.

As we go to press, it is still raining, and there is danger from the Old Man River, which seems to be still on the rise.

Oldtimers state that the floods were the worst experienced in twenty years in this district.

Owing to the extreme water pressure the water from the reservoir was cut off this morning to lighten the burden on the mains through town. Owing to some mishap along the western line of the B.C. and Alberta Power Co., the electric service had to be cut off during the day.

At Coleman the operation of the mines had to be temporarily suspended, owing to an inflow of water, but it is expected that work will resume in a day or two.

A follow-up story appeared in the June 7, 1923 edition:

FLOOD DAMAGE MAY REACH QUARTER MILLION

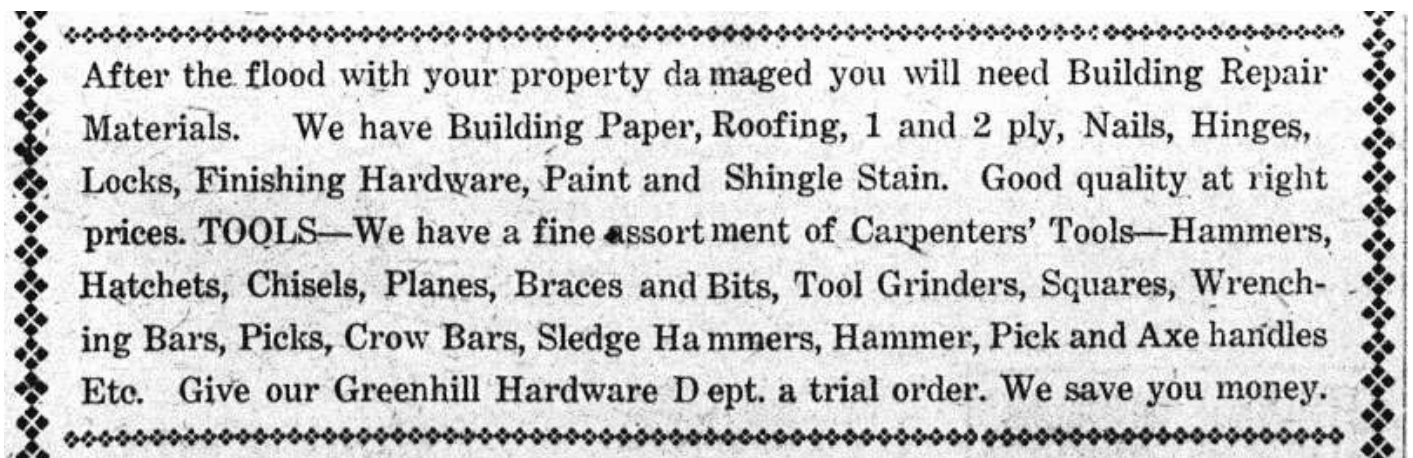
Damages to railway tracks, streets, roads, bridges and private properties throughout this district as a result of the recent floods may be conservatively estimated at a quarter of a million dollars. This would not include damage to mines through flooding and loss of trade, together with labor which has been almost completely knocked out. It will be at least a month before conditions will become anything like normal. At present only a few men are working in or around the mines, and as the railway tracks and bridges are damaged considerably, it will be some time before coal can be shipped to outside markets.

All through the Crow's Nest Pass, from Fernie to Pincher, great damage was wrought. Besides the washing away of railway tracks and bridges, auto roads and bridges, houses have been bereft of their foundations, gardens swept of their roots,

and damage beyond estimation done to contents of basements.

The greatest damage was done in West Coleman and Central Blairmore, where some buildings were completely swept from their foundations and twisted beyond repair. The new cement bridge built last year in East Coleman met a fate similar to that of the Lyon Creek Victoria bridge at Blairmore and the structure lies a complete ruin partially embedded in loose rocks and logs. The Victoria bridge has practically fallen to pieces, despite the reinforcement that stood inspection last fall. The spur bridge at Hillcrest lost several piers. The spur bridges at Blairmore were considerably damaged through dynamite used to free the structures from logs and stumps. The main auto road both east and west of Blairmore was undermined in sections so as to be almost impassable.

Word has come from Cowley that the river has taken a course near the South Fork bridge, following the old river bed along the eastern embankment.



After the flood with your property damaged you will need Building Repair Materials. We have Building Paper, Roofing, 1 and 2 ply, Nails, Hinges, Locks, Finishing Hardware, Paint and Shingle Stain. Good quality at right prices. **TOOLS**—We have a fine assortment of Carpenters' Tools—Hammers, Hatchets, Chisels, Planes, Braces and Bits, Tool Grinders, Squares, Wrenching Bars, Picks, Crow Bars, Sledge Hammers, Hammer, Pick and Axe handles Etc. Give our Greenhill Hardware Dept. a trial order. We save you money.

F. M. Thompson and Co. advertisement, *Blairmore Enterprise*, June 7, 1923

Our Local Heritage Sites (check websites for current rates and schedules)



- **CROWSNEST MUSEUM and ARCHIVES** - 7701 18th Avenue, in Coleman National Historic Site. 403-563-5434, cnmuseum@shaw.ca, www.crowsnestmuseum.ca. Glimpse the rich social, economic, and natural heritage of Crowsnest Pass from 1900 - 1950 in two floors of themed rooms, plus large artifacts outdoors. Gift shop features local and regional books, and many other items.



- Close to the museum, the newly-restored **ALBERTA PROVINCIAL POLICE BARRACKS** includes exhibits and artifacts on prohibition, rumrunning, and the legendary shooting of Constable Lawson and the subsequent execution of "Emperor Pic" and Florence Lassandro. 403-563-5434, cnmuseum@shaw.ca, www.appbarracks.com.



- **BELLEVUE UNDERGROUND MINE** - off Main Street in Bellevue. The premiere authentic historic underground coal mine tour of western Canada offers a family-oriented experience of what miners from a century ago saw and heard at work each day. Pre-book tours online; www.bellevuemine.com.



- **FRANK SLIDE INTERPRETIVE CENTRE** - off Hwy 3. 403-562-7388, www.frankslide.ca. Knowledgeable staff share fascinating stories of the Frank Slide of April 1903 through dynamic interpretive programs and presentations. State-of-the-art interactive exhibits focus on Canada's deadliest rockslide. Closed winter Mondays (but open Family Day).



- **HILLCREST CEMETERY PROVINCIAL HISTORIC SITE** - Hillcrest. Visit the mass graves of the 189 victims of the Hillcrest Mine Disaster of 1914, and many other historic graves. Interpretive signs explain it all. The **Millennium Memorial Monument** is Canada's homage to miners killed across the country. The adjacent **park** features interpretive signs about life in Hillcrest and the effect of the disaster, and picnic tables. All free.



- **LEITCH COLLIERIES PROVINCIAL HISTORIC SITE** - Highway 3, east edge of town, www.leitchcollieries.ca. Stabilized ruins of a century-old coal processing facility explained through interpretive signs. Parking lot closed in winter. Check out the nearby **Burmis Tree**, probably Canada's most-photographed tree; free.



- **COLEMAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** - downtown Coleman. Free map and pamphlet for a self-guided tour of this authentic coal-mining town amongst buildings from 1903 - 1986; most have interpretive building plaques. Glimpse the ruins of the mine plant and coke ovens, walk or drive through the "miners cottage" neighbourhood of West Coleman. An interpretive booklet can be purchased at the museum. Later, walk the pleasant **Miners Path**, retracing the steps of miners on their way to the McGillivray Mine. All free.



- **LILLE PROVINCIAL HISTORIC SITE** - A 6km long trail leads to this remote site. Ruins in or near this former mining village include the powerhouse, hotel foundation, and coke ovens. Interpretive signs on site. Enquire at the Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, 403-562-7388. Backcountry safety and etiquette apply. Free.

More information on these sites and other activities is at www.crowsnestheritage.ca