





## Context Paper: Municipal District of Bighorn No.8

### Context Paper

The purpose of the Context Paper is to provide an overview of the major historical and cultural themes and events associated with the development of the municipal district of Bighorn.

### The Municipal District of Bighorn No.8

The Municipal District of Bighorn No.8, previously Improvement District No.8, was created in January of 1988. The municipal district (M.D.) is located east of Banff National Park, along the eastern slopes of the Alberta Rocky Mountains. The municipal district is a rural municipality that covers approximately 2700 square kilometres and is comprised of wilderness areas and five hamlets: Benchlands, Dead Flats, Exshaw, Harvie Heights, and Lac des Arcs. The land encompassed by the municipal district has various uses such as recreational, agricultural, forestry, and ranching. There are also several industrial sites within the municipal district that take advantage of the natural resources in the area, including oil and gas, hydropower, cement production, and mineral extraction of magnesium and lime.

### Pre-Contact Occupation of the Bow Valley and the Mountain Stoney

The Bow Valley area was occupied for hundreds of years before Europeans discovered the New World. Pictographs in the Bow Valley are estimated to be over a thousand years old, and the painted images predate the aboriginal groups that currently call the region home.<sup>1</sup> These images include bison, human figures, moose, deer, elk, and handprints, some of which are located higher than a human could reach unassisted and would have required the use of scaffolding or ladders to place on the cliff.<sup>2</sup>

The people living in the Bow Valley at the time of contact were the Assiniboia, or Mountain Stoney, whose language, Nakoda, is closely related to the Sioux in the United States.<sup>3</sup> The Assiniboia immigrated to the area from the southern United States around 1640 AD, and were some of the first peoples to trade with the Bay Company (HBC) when the HBC ventured west.<sup>5</sup> By 1790, the Assiniboia had formed two distinct groups in western Alberta: the Mountain Stoney and the Plains Stoney.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, *Exshaw: Heart of the Valley*, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005, pp. 28.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>3</sup> Alberta Online Encyclopedia, *Voices*:  
[http://www.abheritage.ca/eldersvoices/peoples/language\\_nakoda.html](http://www.abheritage.ca/eldersvoices/peoples/language_nakoda.html)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 30

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-31.

The signing of Treaty 7 in 1877 confined all three southern Mountain Stoney bands to a reserve in Morley.<sup>7</sup> Tensions between the groups were high and travel and hunting rights were increasingly restricted as settlers came into the area.<sup>8</sup> To supplement government support, the Stoney people cut, corded and hauled firewood and later coal to the Loders Lime kilns at the original Kananaskis settlement.<sup>9</sup>

### Surveying the Bow Valley

In 1800, David Thompson became the first surveyor and mapmaker to chart the Bow Valley.<sup>10</sup> Surveying the Rocky Mountains did not begin in earnest until 1871, when British Columbia joined Canada and the British government promised to build a railroad to the west coast within the next ten years.<sup>11</sup> A suitable pass through the mountains to accomplish this was not found until 1881-1882, and it was surveyed by a Canadian Pacific Railway survey crew from Fort Calgary rather than by Dominion Surveyors.<sup>12</sup> The CPR survey crew included famed American surveyor Major A.B. Rogers, who discovered the Rogers Pass.<sup>13</sup>

The Dominion Land Survey reached the Rocky Mountains by 1882.<sup>14</sup> Land was surveyed into six mile square townships using the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel as the first base line.<sup>15</sup> The lots were numbered serially moving north of the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel, and were staked out using first wooden, then iron pegs.<sup>16</sup> Allowances were made in the township system to accommodate existing settlements, such as Morleyville, which was originally surveyed using the river lot system.<sup>17</sup> The river lot system divided land into long, narrow plots that bordered a river or lake. The river lot system was modeled after the Seigneurial System used in Quebec, and unlike the township system the river lots were not of a fixed size.<sup>18</sup> This was done to accommodate land ownership claims made by a settler living in a community settled before the land was surveyed. Today, the plans for these communities are known as Settlement Plans.<sup>19</sup>

The land registration system used in Alberta is the Torrens System, which operates under the authority of the Land Titles Act.<sup>20</sup> Under this system, the government has legal responsibility for

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>11</sup> Courtney C.J. Bond, *Surveying in Canada: 1867-1900*, The Canadian Surveyor 20, no. 5 (1966):127-128.

<sup>12</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, *Exshaw: Heart of the Valley, Manitoba*: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005, pp. 79.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>14</sup> Courtney C.J. Bond, *Surveying in Canada: 1867-1900*, The Canadian Surveyor 20, no. 5 (1966): 26.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 20-22.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>18</sup> Government of Alberta, *An Introduction to Alberta Land Titles*, [http://www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/pdf/ltmanual/LTO\\_Booklet1.pdf](http://www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/pdf/ltmanual/LTO_Booklet1.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 3.

the validity and security of all registered land title information, and has legal custody of all original land titles.<sup>21</sup>

### Early Residential Development in the Bow Valley

The first settlement in what was to become the municipal district of Bighorn was Morleyville.<sup>22</sup> Morleyville was founded 1873 when Methodist missionary John McDougall arrived in the area to build a mission for the Stoney and other First Nation groups in the area.<sup>23</sup> The settlement consisted of a few houses surrounded by a wooden palisade and was occupied by McDougall, his brother David, business partner Kenneth McKenzie Jr., and several families.<sup>24</sup> The settlement was named after Reverend Dr. William Morley Punshon, a Methodist minister and a supporter of mission in the Bow Valley area.<sup>25</sup> John McDougall built a school and the first Methodist church in Alberta in 1874, and was influential in persuading the First Nations groups in the Bow Valley area to sign Treaty 7 in 1877.<sup>26</sup> The Morleyville settlement was abandoned by the missionaries in 1925, when the Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists amalgamated to become the United Church.<sup>27</sup> The McDougall family continues to own land in the municipal district of Bighorn and surrounding area. There are several sites throughout Alberta named in honour of the McDougall family to commemorate their influence on the development of early Alberta, including schools, churches, and government buildings.

The Padmore settlement on the Bow River was named after Fred (Paddy) W. Padmore. Fred Padmore was part of a Canadian Pacific Railway survey team and became the assistant commissary in charge of the storehouse built in the Bow River Gap circa 1881.<sup>28</sup> The original settlement consisted of five individuals but soon grew with the addition of Scotsman and entrepreneur McCandlish, who built three wood-fired lime pot kilns nearby.<sup>29</sup> The Padmore settlement was largely abandoned shortly after the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 in favour of the original Kananaskis settlement located a kilometre further west. North West Mounted Police Officer Colonel James Walker maintained a seasonal log driving camp at Padmore after moving his sawmill operation to Calgary around 1886.<sup>30</sup>

The original Kananaskis settlement was linked to the lime kilns started by McCandlish, which may have been originally started by Johnson and Company.<sup>31</sup> In 1883 Edwin Loder came to the area and worked the lime kilns with McCandlish. Loder filed for rights to the

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>22</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, *Exshaw: Heart of the Valley*, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005, pp 73.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 71, 73.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 79-80.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 88.

operation when McCandlish failed to return from a routine business trip to Calgary in 1889.<sup>32</sup> three brothers soon joined him to run the lime kilns. In 1901 the census registered fourteen residents at the original Kananaskis settlement, including one child.<sup>33</sup> The Loders Lime operation was the economic heart of the settlement, and employed the majority of the residents.<sup>34</sup>

The hamlet of Exshaw owes its existence to the Western Canada Cement and Coal Company (WCCCC). Two employees of the International Portland Cement Company, Hugh Fleming and Dan Diver, discovered a mountain of high quality limestone in the Bow Valley located near shale deposits containing the silica, alumina, and iron needed to create Portland Cement.<sup>35</sup> The existence of a CPR line through the area to transport the cement across the country convinced the WCCCC to buy the land in 1905, backed by the CPR and the Bank of Montreal.<sup>36</sup> Land was cleared for the plant and an adjacent townsite that year.<sup>37</sup>

Exshaw began as a carefully planned community arranged around Portland Avenue, but by the time the first twenty buildings had been constructed, the community had a much more organic layout and was surrounded by a scattering of houses arranged randomly on the landscape.<sup>38</sup> Construction supplies were shipped into the community by train, and a road between Canmore and Exshaw was built in 1908.<sup>39</sup> During the construction of the cement plant and company town, the community was overwhelmingly populated by white males.<sup>40</sup> The population primarily consisted of men from England, Austria, Italy, the United States, Scotland, Finland, and Germany, with a few others from Australia, Tasmania, South America, Hungary, Denmark, Ireland, Norway, Iceland, Poland, Sweden, and Belgium.<sup>41</sup> Asian immigrants also lived and worked in Exshaw, but they faced a great deal of discrimination that included barring them from burial within the boundaries of the Exshaw cemetery.<sup>42</sup>

The former company town of Seebe is located on Highway 1X approximately ten kilometres east of Exshaw. The land was purchased from the Stoney in 1909.<sup>43</sup> Seebe was a company town owned by Calgary Power, which later became TransAlta, and accommodated employees who worked at the nearby Horseshoe and Kananaskis dams. Seebe was home to the first dam built on the Bow River, the Horseshoe Dam. As the operation modernised, fewer employees were needed and the company town closed in 2003. There are currently no residents in the community of Seebe. Several unoccupied residential buildings remain, including

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 88, 90.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 123.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>43</sup> Nakoda Interpretation by TransAlta panel near Seebe

the \_\_\_\_\_ House, along with the Seebe School, the Seebe store, a bunkhouse, and a curling rink. Only the buildings necessary for the operation of the dams are still in use.

The former residential community of Gap Settlement was established in circa 1900 eight kilometres east of Exshaw, near Gap Lake.<sup>44</sup> Like many other small communities along the rail line, the Gap Settlement was the location of a whistle stop.<sup>45</sup> In 1907 the first school in the district was opened at Exshaw with children from the Gap Settlement in attendance. Before then, there were not enough children in Exshaw, the original Kananaskis Settlement, or the Gap Settlement to warrant a school, and the nearest schools were located in Morley and Canmore.<sup>46</sup> The community of Gap included a teahouse built in the 1940s and several small cabins, which have now been demolished.<sup>47</sup> The Gap Lake area was also home to the first Rockwool production facility and quarry built circa 1930s, located on Grotto Mountain. The plant closed in 1983, and the site has since been reclaimed.<sup>48</sup>

The hamlet of Benchlands is located along the Ghost River and Highway 40, approximately fifty-eight kilometres northeast of Exshaw and fifteen kilometres north from the Highway 1A junction. In the 1930s Mrs. Wynne registered a quarter section as a Junior Townsite to subdivide into residential lots, and she named it Benchlands. In 1934 Guy Gibson bought the registered Junior Townsite from Mrs. Wynne. Over the years Guy Gibson built many cabins at Benchlands. Benchlands was initially a summer community, and only later did families begin to make their permanent homes there. Benchlands was recognised as a Hamlet in 1978.<sup>49</sup>

Harvie Heights is located five kilometres west of Canmore, just outside the Banff National Park boundary. Harvie Heights was founded in the 1950s as a summer resort community by the provincial government with a total of sixty-four lots available for lease by private individuals. Applicants were asked to build within the first year of the lease. The rent of the lease was twenty-five dollars annually. At that time, the leases were expected to last ten years. No temporary structures were permitted nor buildings that did not keep with the scenic beauty of the area.<sup>50</sup> The province sold the lots to the lease holders a few years after its creation.<sup>51</sup>

The hamlet of Dead \_\_\_\_\_ Flats is located on the Trans-Canada Highway approximately seven kilometres east of Canmore. When the highway was constructed west of Calgary along the south side of the Bow River in the late 1950s, the community was identified as Dead Flats. Residents objected to the name and in the 1970s the community was known as Pigeon

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<sup>44</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, *Exshaw: Heart of the Valley, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005*, pp 103

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 136

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 178

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 331, 334

<sup>48</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, *Exshaw: Heart of the Valley, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005*, pp 332-333

<sup>49</sup> Harry Sanders, *The Story Behind Alberta Names: How cities, Town, villages and Hamlets Got their* Calgary: Red Deer Press, 2003 pp 48

<sup>50</sup> Calgary Herald, "New Resort Town Opens This Year Near \_\_\_\_\_ June, 2010.

<sup>51</sup> Jeff Adams, \_\_\_\_\_ Calgary Herald, August 19, 1995.

Mountain Service Centre after the nearby ski hill of Pigeon Mountain. When the ski hill closed in the 1980s, the name of the community was changed back to Dead Flats.<sup>52</sup>

The hamlet of Lac Des Arcs is located eighteen kilometres east of Canmore just off the Trans-Canada Highway, on the south side of the Bow River across from Exshaw. The hamlet originated in 1962 as the result of a controversial subdivision approval, the issue being the alluvial dust that was known to blow off the lake area to the west when water levels dropped. Consequently, the initial approval anticipated a summer cottage resort community but it quickly became home for many full time residents. This mix has continued, with about half the hamlet comprised of full time residents.<sup>53</sup> The community was designated a hamlet in 1979 and named for the nearby lake, Lac Des Arcs.<sup>54</sup>

### Education in Exshaw

The first school in the district opened in Exshaw in 1907.<sup>55</sup> Before then, there were not enough children in Exshaw or the nearby settlements of the original Kananaskis and the Gap to warrant a school, and the nearest schools were in Morley, which opened 1875 and in Canmore which opened in 1894.<sup>56</sup> The Exshaw school used an old mill office building until the Department of Education built a new school in Exshaw on Western Canada Cement and Coal Company land.<sup>57</sup> The new one-room school had electricity, a coal-fired furnace and hard wood floors, and was built of sandstone blocks brought from Calgary.<sup>58</sup> Students attended from Exshaw, the original Kananaskis settlement, and the Gap.<sup>59</sup>

In 1924 the school received a sandstone addition with indoor plumbing, and the addition was used as a classroom for Grades 7, 8 and 9.<sup>60</sup> Students completed correspondence courses for Grades 10, 11, and 12, and took their final exams in Canmore.<sup>61</sup> This school building was destroyed by fire in 1932 when furnace pipes overheated, and a new school was opened in Exshaw in 1933.<sup>62</sup> The new wood frame school had a brick and stucco exterior, multiple classrooms, and facilities to accommodate typing classes, home economics, and a shop.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Harry Sanders, *The Story Behind Alberta Names: How cities, Town, villages and Hamlets Got their* Calgary: Red Deer Press, 2003 pp 106-107

<sup>53</sup> Greg Birch, e-mail message to author, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010

<sup>54</sup> Harry Sanders, *The Story Behind Alberta Names: How cities, Town, villages and Hamlets Got their* Calgary: Red Deer Press, 2003 pp 184

<sup>55</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, *Exshaw: Heart of the Valley*, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005, pp 178.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 178.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 178.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 178, 179.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

Two classrooms were added to the school in 1954, and the school grew from two to three teachers: Harry and Hazel Parkinson, and Vernon A. McNamee.<sup>64</sup> Harry and Hazel Parkinson were a husband and wife team who had taught at Exshaw School since 1929.<sup>65</sup> They remained in Exshaw until their retirement in 1955, and a duplex was constructed to accommodate new staff brought in to replace them.<sup>66</sup> Vernon A. McNamee replaced Harry Parkinson as school principal in 1955.<sup>67</sup>

A new school was built in Exshaw in 1960 that had five classrooms, a library and an office.<sup>68</sup> The new school accommodated Grades 5 to 9, while Grades 1 to 4 remained in the 1933 school building.<sup>69</sup> Two new teacherages were constructed and three buildings purchased as teacherages to accommodate the new teachers.<sup>70</sup>

In 1961 an agreement was signed allowing ten children from Morley to attend school in Exshaw, and in 1969 the Kananaskis School Division No.5100 joined Exshaw School Division No.1699.<sup>71</sup> Rent for the teacherages also increased from \$40 to \$100 per month in 1969, and the homes became available for rent by tenants other than School Board employees.<sup>72</sup> When uptown Exshaw was demolished to make way for the cement plant expansion in 1973, the 1933 school building was destroyed and Exshaw once again had only one school building.<sup>73</sup> In 1974 six portables were added to the 1960 school to accommodate the increase in students.<sup>74</sup>

In the 1970s the Exshaw School Board decided to participate in the Bow River Regional School Division No.4, which was an experimental administrative concept that involved sharing administrative structures and personnel.<sup>75</sup> The experiment was less successful than hoped, and in 1978 the Banff School District withdrew from the project, followed by the Exshaw School District in 1980.<sup>76</sup> The Exshaw School District No.1699 had only one school, and in 1986 Improvement District No.8 purchased the land that the Exshaw School and teacherage duplex occupied, thereby qualifying it for provincial grants.<sup>77</sup>

In 1994 Exshaw School Division No.1699 amalgamated with Mount Rundle School Division No. 64, the Banff School Division, and the Lake Louise School Division to become the Canadian Rockies School Division No.12, which is now known as the Canadian Rockies Public School

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 185.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 182.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 182.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 182.

Division.<sup>78</sup> All the teacherages except the duplex were sold at this time.<sup>79</sup> Renovations on the Exshaw School began in 2000, and the Exshaw School continues to serve the community.<sup>80</sup>

### The Canadian Pacific Railroad

In 1881, it was decided that the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) Transcontinental line would be built through the Bow Valley on its way to British Columbia.<sup>81</sup> This decision would have a huge impact on the development of the area. The railway line crossed the Rocky Mountains along the Bow Valley, and the last spike was driven into the line in Craigellachie, British Columbia, on November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1885.<sup>82</sup> The CPR railgangs earned a short distance track laying record for laying 600 feet of track in 6.5 minutes at the Gap due to the gentle grade of the Bow Valley.<sup>83</sup>

Whistle stops along the Bow Valley Run included Morley, Osada, Seebe, Padmore (Kananaskis), Exshaw, Gap, and Canmore.<sup>84</sup> Of those, Morley, Exshaw, and Canmore were stations with freight and passenger facilities.<sup>85</sup> Trains would stop at these stations on a regular schedule, while trains would stop at the other stations only if there was a green flag or a lantern displayed, depending on whether it was day or night.<sup>86</sup>

The first train station in Exshaw was a parked boxcar on a siding.<sup>87</sup> It served as a train station, telegraph office and home for George Dineen, who was the station agent at that time.<sup>88</sup> A temporary building was constructed to house the station until 1907, when a permanent station was constructed along the side of the tracks.<sup>89</sup> That building was demolished in the 1970s.<sup>90</sup>

The presence of the CPR in the Bow Valley enabled industry to flourish, as it made the exportation of products such as Portland cement and live cattle possible. The presence of the rail line also brought a number of distinguished individuals through Exshaw, although few alighted from their trains. These include Sam Steele and a contingent of North West Mounted Police travelling back through Alberta from British Columbia to deal with the North West Rebellion in 1885, Sir John A. MacDonald and his wife in 1886, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall in 1901, and King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in 1939.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 183.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 183.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 183.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 141.

## Early Industry in the Bow Valley

The settlement of the Bow Valley area was hugely influenced by local industry, especially the extraction and processing of lime. Graymont Western Canada Inc. and Lafarge Canada are the modern incarnations of the two companies whose industry has shaped the Bow Valley region since the early 1900s.

The first lime kilns and quarry in the area, which became the first major industrial site in the Bow Valley, were built circa 1890 by Johnson & Company or Scotsman McCandlish near the Padmore settlement.<sup>92</sup> The site consisted of three wood-fired pot kilns.<sup>93</sup> The pot kilns were built into the side of a hill and were open at the side and top.<sup>94</sup> Quarried limestone was piled inside and cooked for days with firewood.<sup>95</sup> The pot kilns were very labour intensive and required a great deal of firewood to run.<sup>96</sup>

In 1889, McCandlish failed to return from a trip to Calgary and Edwin Loder filed for and was granted rights to the lime operation.<sup>97</sup> Edwin Loder and his three brothers renamed the operation Loder Brothers, discontinued the use of the original wood-fired pot kilns and built new more efficient coal-fired vertical kilns.<sup>98</sup> Vertical kilns were open at the top and bottom, and heated in the middle. Lime was added to the top, cooked in the middle, and had cooled by the time it was retrieved from the bottom. The upgrade cost \$10,000, and the plant renewed operations closer to the quarry in 1908 under the name Loders Lime Company Limited.<sup>99</sup>

The company remained in the family until it was sold to Harry Garnett in 1938.<sup>100</sup> Company facilities were in poor shape, and an upgrade was needed to continue operating safely. The plant was renovated and lime processing and hydrating facilities were added to the operation for a cost of \$12,000 to \$13,000.<sup>101</sup> The board of directors decided to install hydrator machinery and a calcium carbonate plant soon after the upgrade was completed, and the hydrator machinery and calcium carbonate plant provided enough work to carry the company through the Second World War.<sup>102</sup>

Harry Garnett died in 1940 and his wife, Margaret, took over the company.<sup>103</sup> She ran Loders Lime until she sold it to Steel Brothers & Company in 1952, and the new owners immediately

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 88-89.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 89-90.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 92-93.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 93.

began to upgrade the operation.<sup>104</sup> Fuel for the kilns was changed from coal to natural gas and the quarry was mechanized.<sup>105</sup> In 1967 the plant installed a gas-fired inclined rotary kiln.<sup>106</sup> An inclined rotary kiln is a long, slightly inclined cylindrical kiln that rotates along its central axis and is heated from its base.<sup>107</sup> Rotary kilns can process larger amounts of lime, and Steel earnings increased as a result.<sup>108</sup> A second gas-fired inclined rotary kiln began operating in 1972, and in 1979 Highway 1A was upgraded in response to the increase in industrial traffic generated by the plant.<sup>109</sup>

In 1988 the Steel Brothers sold the operation to Continental Lime.<sup>110</sup> A year later the lime plant was sold to Graymont Western Canada Inc.<sup>111</sup>

Robert Prim Butchart began operating at Gap Lake in the Bow Corridor before the turn of the twentieth century, and was instrumental in introducing Portland cement technology to the area.<sup>112</sup> The quarry was located uphill from the vertical kiln, so that carts filled with limestone could descend the 200 feet to the kiln on the valley floor. The plant was small and used a vertical cement kiln, which became outdated in 1902 when American inventor Thomas Edison patented a new kiln process of inclined coal fired rotary kilns. With the vertical kiln process, the lime is fed into the top of vertical shaft kilns and heated to mid-way down the shaft. Air is drawn up from the bottom of the shaft to cool the lime, and the burnt lime is retrieved from the bottom. The new inclined kilns were longer and able to process more lime, and improved energy efficiency and process control. The operation and vertical shaft kiln were unprofitable, so he sold the limestone plant to the Robinson family. The Robinsons continued to quarry and manufacture cement until 1907, when they were displaced by the cement plant at Exshaw. In 1952 the quarry was bought by Steel Brothers, whose operation became Graymont in 1989.<sup>113</sup> The Butchart vertical kiln was partially buried under gravel when the road to the quarry was built, and the slot quarry is being reclaimed.<sup>114</sup> Graymont continues to be a major employer and lime processor in the area.

The second major industrial site in the Bow Valley, located in what was to become the hamlet of Exshaw, was constructed by the Western Canada Cement and Coal Company in 1905 to take advantage of the high quality limestone and silica, alumina, and iron deposits needed to create Portland cement.<sup>115</sup> The seven-acre parcel of land for the future plant was cleared by

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>107</sup> Wikipedia, Rotary Kiln, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotary\\_kiln](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotary_kiln).

<sup>108</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, *Exshaw: Heart of the Valley, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005*, pp. 93-94.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 103 - 107

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 529

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 107

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 122.

hand, six custom-designed kilns were installed to process the lime, fifteen buildings were constructed to house plant machinery and as warehousing, and the final total for construction was \$1.5 million.<sup>116</sup> The new plant was hailed as a addition to Portland cement industry, and was the largest cement plant in the Valley.<sup>117</sup>

The plant, however, opened a year behind schedule and was plagued by debt.<sup>118</sup> In 1911 the WCCCC sold the Exshaw plant to the Canada Cement Company for a paltry \$50,000, becoming the seventh of the newly formed plants in Canada.<sup>119</sup> The Canada Cement Company decided to modernize the Exshaw plant in 1912, and replaced three of the six kilns with kilns.<sup>120</sup> The remaining three kilns were shut down.<sup>121</sup> The First World War slowed the market for cement and production at the plant was reduced to a quarter of its capacity. The Great Depression further reduced the market and hampered the Exshaw ability to produce cement.<sup>122</sup>

Although the Second World War impacted the Exshaw ability to function at full capacity, the plant benefited greatly from post-war economic boom. Between 1945 and 1947 two new kilns replaced the kilns; one was and the other was in length.<sup>123</sup> The Exshaw plant switched from a dry-process to a wet-process for cement production in 1951, and the new process was cleaner, easier, and more productive.<sup>124</sup> A new quarry and a third long kiln were added in the early 1950s, but the increase in activity caused the people of nearby Seebe to file a complaint because of the dust and smog produced by the plant.<sup>125</sup>

In 1970 the Canada Cement Company merged with Lafarge Canada, and in 1974 Lafarge expanded the plant into the Exshaw townsite and installed a fourth kiln that was in length.<sup>126</sup> In 1979 a fifth kiln was added to the operation, and in 2002 the plant was converted from natural gas back to coal in response to rising fuel costs.<sup>127</sup> The Exshaw plant continues to be a major economic contributor in the Bow Valley and is currently the largest employer in the Bow Valley area.

## Ranching

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 123, 130.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 161.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 161.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 161.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 164.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 161-162.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 163.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 163, 164.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 164.

Ranching began in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in the early 1800s,<sup>128</sup> and initially was quite successful. The cattle market focused mostly on the live shipment of cattle to Great Britain, and cattle from the Bow Valley area were shipped to eastern Canada by rail.<sup>129</sup> Unfortunately, the unusually harsh winter of 1905-1906 killed thousands of heads of cattle,<sup>130</sup> and that combined with the growing popularity of homesteading, rising provincial land taxes, and a flood of Argentinean beef into the British market meant that ranching as an occupation diminished in popularity and many ranchers abandoned their operations in 1911 and 1912.<sup>131</sup>

The cattle industry recovered two years later due to improved provincial leasing tenures and the addition of the United States as an export market.<sup>132</sup> This rapid improvement in leasing, the availability of good pastures, and the ability of the CPR to transport western beef to eastern markets meant that the cattle industry survived its early mishaps to become a primary industry in the Bow Valley area.<sup>133</sup>

### The National Park

Rocky Mountains Park received National Park status in 1887, and was the first national park in Canada and the third designated national park in the world.<sup>134</sup> The discovery of mineral hot springs in 1883 prompted Sir John A. MacDonal to create a reserve area in 1885 in order to retain public ownership of the land and avoid losing the hot springs to private speculators.<sup>135</sup> It quickly became a tourist destination because of the spectacular landscape and the hot springs. The motorists coming into the park were registered by the Royal North West Mountain Police.<sup>136</sup> From 1904 until 1910 no cars were allowed in the park.<sup>137</sup>

The increasing popularity of car clubs and car touring meant that issuing passes to motor tourists began to interfere with policing duties. In 1916 a park gate was constructed on Loder land in the present day Kananaskis Settlement, and park gate duty granted to Annie Staple, the wife of a park warden.<sup>138</sup> This first, temporary gate consisted of a tent and a table beneath a tree.<sup>139</sup> In 1917 a timber archway and a small office were constructed. When the

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>129</sup> Cheryl Croucher, Bar U Ranch, Part Alberta Online Encyclopedia: Alberta Rural Life, [http://www.abheritage.ca/pasttopresent/en/rural\\_life/392\\_BarU\\_P1.html](http://www.abheritage.ca/pasttopresent/en/rural_life/392_BarU_P1.html).

<sup>130</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, Exshaw: Heart of the Valley, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005, pp. 86.

<sup>131</sup> Max Foran, "Mixed Blessings, The second 'Golden Age' of the Alberta Cattle Industry 1914-1920," Alberta Online Encyclopedia, [http://www.abheritage.ca/pasttopresent/en/rural\\_life/abhistory\\_ranching.html](http://www.abheritage.ca/pasttopresent/en/rural_life/abhistory_ranching.html).

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, Exshaw: Heart of the Valley, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005, pp. 86.

<sup>134</sup> Parks Canada, Banff National Park, <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/ab/banff/index.aspx>.

<sup>135</sup> Parks Canada, This Week in History, [http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/cseh-twih/archives2\\_E.asp?id=683](http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/cseh-twih/archives2_E.asp?id=683)

<sup>136</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, Exshaw: Heart of the Valley, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005, pp. 174.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 174.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 175-176.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 175.

park boundary was moved west in 1930, and renamed the Banff National Park, Annie Staple was transferred to other park gates for a short period of time before returning to the new Banff park gate location in 1931.

### Forestry and Forest Fire Prevention

Forestry was and continues to be a major industry in the Bow Valley. One of the first mills in the Bow Valley area was operated by Colonel James Walker, a retired North West Mounted Police officer who helped lead the NWMP in their 1874 trek along the Canadian border from Ottawa to the lawless west.<sup>140</sup> Walker bought a sawmill from the Cochrane Ranch and relocated it near the original Kananaskis Settlement when the CPR arrived in the Bow Valley in 1883.<sup>141</sup> By 1884 mill had processed two million board feet, and Walker began selling timber to the CPR for railway ties and timber.<sup>142</sup> When the CPR finished the railroad in 1886, demand for timber by the CPR decreased and Walker moved his mill, the Bow River Lumber Company, onto his homestead near the confluence of the Elbow and Bow rivers in order to take advantage of the building boom in Calgary.<sup>143</sup>

The largest lumber company in the Bow Valley area was the Eau Claire Lumber Company. The Eau Claire Lumber Company was a joint endeavour by Ottawa lawyer Kutusoff Macfee, Isaac Kendal Kerr of the North West Lumber Company, and William Cameron and Dan Donnellan from Eau Claire, Wisconsin.<sup>144</sup> Eau Claire, Wisconsin, was a major lumber producer in the United States, but deforestation meant that by the 1800s the industry was looking elsewhere for new opportunities.<sup>145</sup> By 1884 the Eau Claire and Bow River Lumber Company obtained titles to ten lumber berths with a total area of approximately 1238 square kilometres.<sup>146</sup> The Eau Claire Lumber main market was the construction industry in the Calgary area,<sup>147</sup> but they also supplied wood for cabins and other buildings in the Ghost Valley area, including the Patterson Cabin built by Guy Gibson in the early 1930s. The Eau Claire Lumber Company used the Ghost River to transport logs to the mill. Raymond Patterson selected logs for his cabin as they floated downstream to the mill.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 83

<sup>144</sup> Kelly Buziak, *in the Woods: Aspects of the Lumber Business in Alberta to Encyclopedia: Early Industry: Case Studies: Bow Valley Beginnings*, Alberta Online  
[http://www.abheritage.ca/abresources/history/history\\_case\\_forest\\_bow.html](http://www.abheritage.ca/abresources/history/history_case_forest_bow.html).

<sup>145</sup> Kelly Buziak, *in the Woods: Aspects of the Lumber Business in Alberta to Encyclopedia: Early Industry: Case Studies: Eau Claire*, Alberta Online  
[http://www.abheritage.ca/abresources/history/history\\_case\\_forest\\_bow\\_eau.html](http://www.abheritage.ca/abresources/history/history_case_forest_bow_eau.html).

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Cochrane and Area Historical Society *Hill Country Cochrane and Area Calgary: D.W. Friesen & Sons Ltd*, 1977

Logging in the area was in decline after the Second World War, partially because Banff National Park began to limit logging within its borders and the federal government imposed harvesting regulations protecting trees with a diameter of less than eight inches (20 centimetres).<sup>149</sup> The Eau Claire Lumber Company remained in business in the Bow Valley area until 1956, when the company dissolved.<sup>150</sup>

Forest fire management is a vital aspect of the forestry industry. Forestry management in western Canada began in 1882 when a Crown timber agent and a forest ranger were stationed in Edmonton.<sup>151</sup> A second forest ranger was stationed in Calgary.<sup>152</sup> In 1919 Great burned 2.8 million hectares in Saskatchewan and south eastern Alberta,<sup>153</sup> and the devastation it caused made the need for better fire detection, faster communication, and improved access to fire areas apparent.<sup>154</sup> Two years later, in 1921, the first fire control plan was developed for forests and the first fire lookout cabin was constructed.<sup>155</sup> The Black Rock Mountain fire lookout was constructed in 1928.<sup>156</sup> The Black Rock Mountain fire lookout was replaced by the Mockingbird lookout in 1950, and forestry management and forest fire prevention continues to protect, conserve and manage the forests of the Bow Valley and area.<sup>157</sup>

### The Cold War and the Bow Valley

The Cold War began after the Second World War ended. The Soviet Union and its proxy states clashed with the Western powers, most notably the United States of America. Their political and ideological differences manifested in political conflict, economic competition, and military tension. The Cold War never became a true war, but its effects were felt world-wide.

The most obvious impact of the Cold War in the Bow Valley was the Rocky Mountain Vaults and Archives proposed vault storage area inside Mount McGillivray. A brochure distributed by the Rocky Mountain Vaults and Archives Ltd. stated that the archival system inside the mountain was to consist of vault rooms carved a minimum of into solid limestone, with steel doors, whitewashed walls, and fresh air piped in from the surface. The underground vault

<sup>149</sup> Kelly Buziak, in the Woods: Aspects of the Lumber Business in Alberta to Alberta Online  
Encyclopedia: Early Industry: Case Studies: Logging Declines,  
[http://www.abheritage.ca/abresources/history/history\\_case\\_forest\\_bow\\_decline.html](http://www.abheritage.ca/abresources/history/history_case_forest_bow_decline.html).

<sup>150</sup> Kelly Buziak, in the Woods: Aspects of the Lumber Business in Alberta to Alberta Online  
Encyclopedia: Early Industry: Case Studies: Eau Claire,  
[http://www.abheritage.ca/abresources/history/history\\_case\\_forest\\_bow\\_eau.html](http://www.abheritage.ca/abresources/history/history_case_forest_bow_eau.html).

<sup>151</sup> Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Wildfire Management, Government of Alberta,  
<http://www.assembly.ab.ca/lao/library/egovdocs/alsrd/2001/130912.pdf>.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Tobi McIntyre, Incendiary Past: Fires that have burned their way into Canadian Canadian  
Geographic Magazine, January 2003,  
<http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/magazine/ja03/indepth/timeline.asp>.

<sup>154</sup> Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Wildfire Management, Government of Alberta,  
<http://www.assembly.ab.ca/lao/library/egovdocs/alsrd/2001/130912.pdf>.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Mike Potter, Fire Lookout Hikes in the Canadian Rockies, Calgary: Luminous Compositions, 2008. pp. 88.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

system was designed to secure corporate and private documents and information against fire, flood, wind, insects, rodents, mildew, cave-ins, theft, and hydrogen bombs.

Local reaction to this scheme was one of incredulity, as the Bow Valley was relatively untouched by the fear that characterized the Cold War in the United States.<sup>158</sup> The vaults were never completed, but the remaining tunnels are a testament to the North American anxiety and paranoia that defined the Cold War.

### The Lafarge Canada Exshaw Plant Expansion

The Lafarge Exshaw Plant expansion had a radical effect on the community of Exshaw. The expansion was announced in 1972 when residents were notified by letter that the cement plant was expanding onto the land then occupied by the town of Exshaw.<sup>159</sup> Plant Manager Tom Pierce visited every family affected by the expansion and explained that the plant had to expand or it would be closed.<sup>160</sup>

The expansion began in July of 1973 and was completed in two phases.<sup>161</sup> Forty-seven homes were affected by the expansion, ten of which were privately owned. The houses owned by the company were offered to their tenants for one dollar, and the owners of privately owned houses on company land were given a sum equalling half the appraised value of the house.<sup>162</sup> The home owners then moved the houses onto lease-land not needed for the plant expansion or onto private lots within the community.<sup>163</sup> Other sites demolished as part of the expansion were the elementary school, the general store, the Protestant church, the Portland Hotel, the curling and skating rinks, and the entirety of Main Street, which was known as Portland Avenue, except for the St. Catholic Church.<sup>164</sup> The Portland Hotel was constructed in 1906 and had been the social hub of the community. It was located at the top of Portland Avenue and served as a community centre, restaurant and dance hall. At that time, the existing plant was also demolished and replaced, and a new 600 foot kiln was installed.<sup>165</sup>

The original configuration ceased to exist as a result of the expansion, but without the much-needed modernization and upgrade, the Lafarge plant would have been unable to remain in business.<sup>166</sup> The plant is the economic foundation for the Bow Valley, and the 1970s expansion has ensured the community of continued survival.

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<sup>158</sup> Rob Alexander, Dark Secret: Your Friendly Neighbourhood Fall-out Highline Magazine, Winter 2009, [http://www.highlineonline.ca/media/winter\\_2009/exposure/dark\\_secret.html](http://www.highlineonline.ca/media/winter_2009/exposure/dark_secret.html)

<sup>159</sup> Rob Alexander and Dene Cooper, Exshaw: Heart of the Valley, Manitoba: Exshaw Historical Society, 2005, pp. 532.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 533.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 532.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 533.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 533.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 532.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., 532, 533.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 533.

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Nakoda            Interpretation panel near Seebe

