



TOWN OF THE CROWN

By JERRY FETZ

As we did a couple of issues ago, when we focused our "Towns of the Crown" feature on Fernie B.C., we are merging again this issue's "Town" feature and our regular "Book Recommendation" by writing about the wonderful and interesting small town of Waterton and the impressive book, Waterton Chronicles. People and their National Park, written by Chris Morrison and edited by Ray Djuff (Waterton Park & Calgary, Gothaunt Publishing: 2008--\$34.95 Canadian). We would like to thank the author and publisher at the outset for permission to use here the cover photo from the book as well as the black-and-white photos included with this piece.

Waterton Lakes is known virtually to everyone as the Canadian portion of the Glacier and Waterton Lakes

International Peace Park and the home of the Prince of Wales Hotel, one of the legendary, grand hotels in this unique, trans-boundary park. Those who have visited the park also know Waterton as the name of a quaint and welcoming village that is nestled between glorious mountains and the grand "Waterton Lakes," a village that offers numerous shops, restaurants, motels and accommodations, as well as a long list of tourist services. Yet, perhaps not as well-known is the fact that Watertown is not just a seasonal, but a year-round town, home to a small but vigorous number of citizens whose ancestors founded the town and negotiated for the past hundred years the challenges of weather, history, politics, changing visitor wishes, and the fact that it is located in a Canadian

National Park as they somehow made their hybrid town work.

This handsome, large format, and weighty book, **WATERTON CHRONICLES**, tells the story (through stories, anecdotes, photos and narrated history) of this "town" that is both home to year round residents and the center of business, services, social and recreational amenities, as well as the administrative offices of the National Park that shares its name. Unlike the other towns that are associated with the Glacier and Waterton Lakes National Parks, this remarkable small town isn't situated somewhere on an edge of one of those parks, but in one of them. As such it has never been a fully independent municipality, and some of the most interesting stories told in this supremely researched

book have to do with the special challenges of negotiating with both the Park administration and Canada's National Parks agency, as well as the changing desires and expectations of seasonal, mostly summer, visitors to be a regular, functioning town and home to that small and hardy citizenry made up of families, business people, artists and scientists, park officials and workers.

WATERTON CHRONICLES boasts some 250 pages, including a very useful index and a fascinating final section that includes photos and brief texts about dozens of the individual houses, cabins, business buildings, and visitor accommodation buildings that have given the town its special man-made physical character for over one-hundred years. I suspect that readers will look at that

section many times, as I have, with great interest, and will gain a visual sense of the history of the town told through its buildings. But most of the information and insights one gets from the book are packed into the first six chapters (of seven) that take up the initial one-hundred-thirty pages. Organized into focused discussions of various aspects of the town's and the Park's intertwined pre-history and history, such as Chapter One, "With Posterity's Blessing," these chapters offer detailed narratives of the town's history, enhanced by textual anecdotes of some of its most colorful and important citizens, or, as in "Camps: the Memory Makers," the story of the importance of variously sponsored camps for youth and adults over time

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and how those experiences transformed many campers into lifelong, loyal supporters of both town and Park and, sometimes, inspired them years later to return and make Waterton their home, usually for the summer season, but sometimes year-round.

Chapter Two, "Accommodations: A Roof Overhead," relates not only the major story of the most famous of them all, the Prince of Wales Hotel, which every visitor to Waterton will want to read, but the varied story of the many smaller hotels, motels, guest cabins, tent and camper parks, and B & B's as well. Through these stories of physical facilities, readers will learn a lot about how the realities of the external world --two World Wars, prohibition, political and social changes—, as well as local floods and fires and changing administrative rules and priorities, affected directly and indirectly the course of the town's and Park's history. Chapters Three ("Entrepreneurs: Like Nobody's Business"), Four ("Golf Course: Grounds for Play"), and Five ("Booze: Prohibition to Privatization") follow the

lead of Chapter Two and offer narratives, sketches, and photos that tell that same history, but with different details and through additional and very informative perspectives. Regardless of whether one is reading about the lives of the various businesses and their owners, or the building, maintaining, and then expanding the initial nine-hole course into eighteen holes, or about how bar, tavern and restaurant owners, as well as their thirsty customers, dealt with prohibition, bootlegging, and administrative regulation, one learns through the details and differing lenses a great deal about Waterton, its visitors, and, most importantly, perhaps, its colorful and inventive people.

The first five chapters, covering pages 4 to 131, can be read as one narrative with several intertwining stories, told from different vantage points, or one can read a chapter or even parts of a chapter separately and still gain great insight into the history of this remarkable place, its people, and its visitors. What the book does not offer, or pretend to offer, is the more spacious story of

Waterton Lakes National Park as a wonder of nature that has grown and expanded and shrunk several times since its inception in 1895 as "Kootenay Lakes Forest Reserve" to its current size, adjusted most recently in 2000. That is an enticing and fascinating story that any one of several other books tells well. What this marvelous book does is tell the story of the town of Waterton. And it is local history at its best, that is, local history that tells of a particular place not in a vacuum, but a place whose history both reflects the reality of the world beyond and is imbedded in it. Available from virtually any of Glacier or Waterton Lakes National Parks' bookshops or directly from Goathunt Publishing in Waterton Park, this book makes a wonderful gift for anyone interested in the Crown and one of its special places and will provide even very knowledgeable Crown fans with new information and insights about a very special place and its people.



CROWN ROUNDTABLE

Integration of Culture, Community and Conservation

by Kim Davitt

When Gwen Phillips of the Ktunaxa Nation shared the Ktunaxa's Creation Story with a group of government agency representatives, tribal members, conservationists, local business people, and local politicians at the 2nd Annual Conference of the Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent last month, people listened. They listened with all their attention, with their heads and their hearts, and they really heard her message: whether embedded in culture and tradition, or informed by science and reason, there is an inextricable link between people and nature in the Crown of the Continent – a link that provides a sense of place and purpose and compels stewardship of the region's landscapes and communities.

This connection between people and nature – characterized as the integration of culture, community, and conservation by the conference hosts, the Confederated Sal-

ish and Kootenai Tribal Council – served as the centerpiece of discussions at the conference. Over the course of the program, participants examined the unique cultural elements that define what it means to live and work in the Crown of the Continent. They explored how the region is adapting to changes across the landscape, in local and regional economies, and to our cultures and traditions. They also informed and invigorated their ideas and work by learning about national and regional initiatives in the United States and Canada. Students from throughout the region helped capture these conversations and ideas and compiled a list of best practices for integrating cultural, economic, and conservation dimensions into decisions being made across this remarkable region.

It was a great opportunity for people who care about the Crown of the Continent to build relationships, exchange information and foster a sense of regional

identity and purpose. "The Crown of the Continent has many meanings for many people," said Gary Tabor of the Center for Large Landscape Conservation, "One of the accomplishments of the Roundtable is that it brings different perspectives together to create some cohesion: a community of people working to protect its unique features and identity."

Building from the discussions at the conference, the Roundtable Leadership Team, comprised of practitioners from all corners of the Crown of the Continent, will work to create a cohesive approach to adaptive management in the region. This group will work with communities, tribes, local governments, businesses, agencies and non-governmental organizations to identify and coordinate existing efforts and to develop a portfolio of projects that will help sustain and enhance the region's communities, landscapes, and culture.