



Jasper-Yellowhead
Museum & Archives

JASPER-YELLOWHEAD

OUR JASPER STORIES

SLEEPY HOLLOW

In 2019 a new Hostelling International building will open near the off leash dog park and Jasper Home Building Centre on Sleepy Hollow Road. Many locations and timelines were suggested for the long promised “town” hostel. With the completion of the pedestrian walkway in 2010, this area became more accessible from town and is now connected to a series of trails that give visitors access to many areas in the Athabasca Valley.

Sleepy Hollow got its start as a cluster of buildings surrounding the Canadian Northern

Railway station. From about 1912 until 1917 there were two railway lines running through the Athabasca Valley. First to arrive on the scene, the Grand Trunk Pacific built its Fitzhugh station where Jasper’s Heritage Railway Station stands today but the Canadian Northern’s station was located a little west of the boulder strewn flats that was to become the town of Jasper. The two struggling railway lines were amalgamated to become Canadian National Railway in 1919 but the Canadian Northern’s buildings were used for much needed housing many years afterward.

The Robson family lived in Sleepy Hollow before Jack Robson commissioned Alfred Calderon to design their Geikie Street home which later became the headquarters for the Jasper Chamber of Commerce after it was moved to Patricia Street. In the 1930s, CN foreman, Oscar Wick and his family lived in the section house. They were very quiet people and the townspeople called the group of buildings Sleepy Hollow. In June 1940, when Joe Medori qualified for the job, he moved his family into the Sleepy Hollow location. Helen Medori recalled that her mother said their home should be called Happy Hollow, as it sure was not very sleepy after that.

The hostel’s next door neighbour has a long history. Jasper’s first lumberyard was established in 1916, initially to provide lumber to the internment camp being built on the Athabasca River near Old Fort Point. It has transferred ownership many times and, over the years, has gone under various names including Jasper Lumber & Hardware, Hayward Lumber, Crawley and Mohr, Timber Mart, and Jasper Home Building Centre.

The opening of the new hostel will mark the end of an era for the Whistlers Hostel, which started as the ski chalet for Whistlers Ski Hill. The chalet was designed by Gordon Sinclair, Jack Pugh did the framing and concrete and the fireplace was built by John Forabosco. This well loved building served as the hub of Jasper’s ski scene until Parks Canada closed down ski operations in 1969. The chalet was then renovated and Parks Canada contracted the operation to the YMCA. In 1979, the Northern

Alberta Hostelling Association took over and it is now run by Hostelling International Pacific Mountain Region. In 2007, the Jasper-Yellowhead Historical Society had a fall outing at the hostel and stories were shared by the people who worked to make the Whistlers Chalet such a special place.

“We’ve long known that Jasper is underserved when it comes to affordable, accessible accommodation,” says Alistair McLean, CEO of HI Canada Pacific Mountain Region. “The new hostel will nearly double our existing

available beds in Jasper and bring them 7 km closer to town. We will be dramatically improving the hostel experience in the area and better cater to the evolving needs of our market.”

The new HI Jasper will consist of four separate buildings. The main three-storey lodge will have accommodation for 157 people in a mix of room options, including 25 four-bed shared rooms, 17 private rooms and five family rooms, some of which will be wheelchair accessible. The main lodge will also feature a fireplace lounge, café, media room, games room, full kitchen and dining space for guests, meeting room, secured bike and ski storage and more backpacker-friendly amenities. Outdoors, guests will find a BBQ section, two patios and a fire pit area. There will be two buildings dedicated to staff accommodation, one maintenance building and parking for 46 vehicles.

“Hostelling International has been operating hostels in Jasper National Park for over 65 years,” says Lenore Neudorf, chair of HI Canada Pacific Mountain Region’s Board of Directors. “It’s very exciting to be bringing the first purpose-built hostel to the park and continue to serve our core mission of providing an affordable and comfortable place to stay for a global community of travellers and adventurers in one of the most beautiful parts of our country.”

The existing hostel will continue to operate until the new one opens in late spring of 2019. Once the new hostel opens, the current property on Whistlers Road will revert back to Parks Canada. Visit www.hihostels.ca for more information regarding HI hostels in the Rockies.



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Open Daily, 10am – 5pm. 400 Bonhomme St.

(Across from the Activity Centre). Current and upcoming temporary exhibitions include “Once... We Were Allies”, a wildlife exhibit by Colleen Campbell a Biologist and Artist, April 4th – June 29th, 2019; “A History of Camping in Jasper”, by Parks Canada, May – October, 2019; “Canadian National Railway, 100th Anniversary in Jasper”, July 1st – November 15th, 2019. Thank you to everyone who helped make our First Annual Mother’s Day Tea a success! To learn more about other upcoming events and exhibitions at the museum visit our website at www.jaspermuseum.org