

Banff Indian Days, July 21-22-23, '31



Scene from the first celebration held on the present grounds at the foot of Cascade Mountain in 1907.

NO SECTION of Canada has a monopoly on Indian summer, but to Banff alone belongs Indian days. Indian summer occurs in the fall after the first light fall of snow; Indian days are in July and are only three in number, but for those for whom they are named there is more real pleasure crowded into that short period of time than they know in the other 365 days of the year.

For three days the Indian is king in Banff. Under the steep cliffs of that mountain named Stoney Chief by his ancestors but re-christened Cascade by the white man, he pitches his village of teepees. Close to Cascade stands Stoney Squaw, bearing today its original Indian name. It is a pretty mountain with its open patches of green, where the wild forget-me-nots grow in profusion. Unlike its companion Stoney Chief, Stoney Squaw does not rise above timber line and has no steep, forbidding cliffs, but only gentle pine-covered slopes. In comparison with the austere majesty of the greater mountain, whose face loses none of its severity when bathed in sunshine and which seems to frown on the valley in stern arrogance when crowned with storm clouds, the smaller one seems to take on an air of sweet femininity. It is then that the reason for the choice of names, made years ago by the Stoneys, is apparent to all.

Stoney Chief and his squaw, as they then stood and stand today, were typical of the brave and his squaw of the ancient tribes. Today, during the three days when the Indian is supreme



CHIEF HECTOR CRAWLER (Calf Child)

in Banff, Stoney Chief looks down on the Indians' teepee village in the same manner as in by-gone years it looked down on the teepees of his ancestors. As evening comes on, the sun as it sets, crowns Stoney Squaw and bathes the little village with its departing light as though it were the mother saying good night and blessing her children and their simple life.

Many times during their three-day visit, the older Indians stand and gaze steadfastly at the surrounding peaks. Arms folded, oblivious to all the activity around them, their wonderful head dresses and brilliant costumes make them conspicuous figures. As they thus stand there is no doubt that for them the wheels of time have temporarily rolled back, and in imagination they are once more standing as they did in youth—as did their fathers before them—lords of the mountains and the plains—majesty amidst the majestic.

The younger men are not affected in this way, for their contact with the whites and the different environment in which they have been raised has to a certain extent dimmed the lustre of the memories and the traditions to which the older Indians cling. Even on Indian Days the younger redskins prefer the dress of the paleface, their tastes running to cowboy costumes.

The event that led to the adoption of Indian days occurred in 1889. In July of that year all rail traffic both east and west of Banff was tied up for a period of ten days when heavy rains washed out the tracks in both direc-

(Continued on Page Three)

FORTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY BANFF INDIAN DAY SPORTS

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, July 21st, 22nd, 23rd

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

FIRST DAY Tuesday, July 21st

GRAND PARADE, 10:00 A.M., OF FIVE HUNDRED STONEY INDIANS, FROM BANFF RACE TRACK TO C. P. R. HOTEL VIA THE BRETTON HALL GROUNDS. CASH PRIZES FOR THE BEST NATIVE COSTUMES. COSTUME JUDGING ON BANFF AVENUE AT 10 A.M.

Commencing at Two P. M.

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. Half Mile Dash | Three Money Prizes |
| 2. Novelty Cigar Race (1 Helper Only) | Three Money Prizes |
| 3. Quarter Mile Dash | Three Money Prizes |
| 4. Two Mile Relay Race, (Two Horses, One Helper) | Three Money Prizes |
| 5. Half Mile Dash (Boys) | Three Money Prizes |
| 6. Slow Race | Three Money Prizes |
| 7. Squaw Foot Race | Three Money Prizes |
| 8. Two Mile Race | Three Money Prizes |

SECOND DAY Wednesday, July 22

GATES OPEN AT THE INDIAN VILLAGE OF A "HUNDRED TEEPEES" AT TWO P. M.

Nowhere on the American Continent can a scene just like this be produced. Here you will see the Indians in their lives of a hundred years ago. The daily occupations of those days will be depicted in and out of the teepees. The Medicine Man's Sun Lodge; Bow and Arrow Making; Buckskin and Bead Work Display; Dried Meat; The Squaw and her Papoose At Home; the Indian Brave and Hunter, with dozens of other camp scenes that will delight and enthral you.

THIRD DAY Thursday, July 23

Commencing at Two P. M.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Half Mile Dash | Three Money Prizes |
| 2. Half Mile Squaw Race | Three Money Prizes |
| 3. One Mile Dash | Three Money Prizes |
| 4. Democrat & Harness Race | Three Money Prizes |
| 5. Indian Cowboy Race | Three Money Prizes |
| 6. Wrestling on Horseback | Three Money Prizes |
| 7. Bow and Arrow Target Contest | Three Money Prizes |
| 8. Bow and Arrow Long Flight Contest | Three Money Prizes |
| 9. Bucking Contest | Three Money Prizes |

Other events arranged if desired. All Monies, such as Gate Receipts, Donations, Etc., Go to the Indians.

Very Attractive Events, War Dance, Sun Dance, Chicken Dance, Etc., Each Evening at The Banff Springs Hotel Grounds—Admission 50 cents.

The Indian Parade and Judging

Parade of the entire tribe on July 21st along Banff Ave. to the Banff Springs Hotel at 10:00 a.m. The judging for the following will take place.

The Chief's Parade at 10:00 a.m. on July 22nd, 23rd, along Banff Avenue to the Banff Springs Hotel via Brettton Hall Grounds

Best Indian Costume, Man and Woman.

Best Indian Costume, Boy and Girl.

Best Warrior Costume.

Best Cowboy Costume.

Prizes for the Most Unique Get-up of Early Days.

Also suitable prizes for others will be given according to the period that costume represents.

From Banff Avenue the Parade will proceed to the Banff Springs Hotel, via the Hotel Brettton Hall Grounds. At the Banff Springs Hotel the prizes for the above will be presented and officials of the C. P. R. will meet the Stoney Chiefs. The Parade will return to the village and disperse.

At 2:00 p.m. each day at the Banff Race Track the program as printed will be carried out.

An evening program of scenic events starting at 7:30 on The Banff Springs Hotel Grounds, July 21st, 22nd and 23rd.

Good sightseeing positions at the race track for autos, also a limited number of seats in the grandstand at 25c.

Admission to Grounds

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

Afternoon:—

Adults 50

Children (under 15) 25

Evenings—to the Banff Springs Hotel Grounds.

Adults 50

Children (under 15) 25

In order to reach the Grounds use only the Taxis bearing the sign "To Indian Races"

Every Evening of July 21-22-23

Starting at 7:30 o'clock on the Banff Springs Hotel Grounds

Unique in all their simplicity are the Stoney Indians, no matter where they gather. Races, Stampedes, Rodeos, Councils, or singing in their own Mission at Morley, their home reservation, they are always "their natural selves."

During the past winter the Rev. Edgar J. Staley, who is in charge of the mission on the Stoney Indian Reservation, was persuaded to take to Calgary some of the musical talent of the Indian Reserve. To the very doors of the largest Cathedral in Calgary was the building packed. Never before had an audience listened to its like. Prehistoric songs of hundreds of years ago, and modern home folk songs, rendered by voices that knew nothing but nature's harmony.

The evening programs are most interesting. Native dancing, dating back to hundreds of years, accompanied always by the Tom-Tom, chanters and wailers.

Nowhere else in the whole of the American Indian population can be seen and heard such weird and wonderful songs and acting—The War Dance; The Chicken Dance; The Deer Dance, and so it goes, something to be seen and never forgotten.

EVERYONE WILL HEAR IT WHO COMES

The Banff Springs Hotel have equipped the grandstand and stage with all the most modern loud speakers, Mikes, Broadcasting and Flood Lights. Wild and thrilling scenes of actual happenings of the Stoney Indians of long ago.

The Indian Day Sports are financed by contributions from the Canadian Pacific Railway Co., Merchants and Hotels of Banff, and by the Gate Receipts. Every cent so raised goes to the Indians either in prize money or provisions.

THE BANFF WINTER CARNIVAL
WILL TAKE PLACE IN
FEBRUARY, 1932

*N. K. Luxton, J. I. Brewster, A. K. Colebrook, Secretary,
Indian Days Committee*

(Continued from Page One)

tions. The Banff Springs hotel, then but a small edifice when compared with the present palatial structure, was crowded with tourists who found time hanging heavily on their hands after the first few days. For the entertainment of his guests, the hotel manager did everything in his power. Finally, when his resources were exhausted he applied for help to Tom Wilson, a Rocky Mountain guide.

Tom produced a wonderful idea. It was no more nor no less than to bring the whole Stoney Indian tribe up from the Morley reservation. He argued that this would not be a hard thing to do, for he was on the best of terms with the Indians—in fact was a blood brother of the tribe and was known to them by the Indian name meaning the Porcupine. The manager was enthusiastic about the idea; to see something new and unexpected would raise the spirits of the guests.

As fast as ponies could carry him, Tom travelled to the Indian reserve. As he had predicted, he had no trouble in getting the Indians to make the trip. The following evening 250 of them were pitching their tents in the shade of Cascade mountain, so quickly had they prepared for and traveled the 40 miles separating Banff and Morley. Not only braves, but squaws and papooses, made that trip.

The next afternoon the Indians, arrayed in buckskins, gay blankets, war paint and feathers, left the encampment and paraded through the main streets of Banff to the hotel. Interest in the newcomers quickly made the guests forget their ennui. Pony races, foot races, and every kind of sport known to the Indians, were organized with braves and squaws participating in the events. Any contests suggested by a hotel guest was immediately tried on the straight race track of the day and which has since become the main road to the Banff Springs hotel. The day was a howling ki-yi-yung success.

Previous to this event, May 24 and July 1 had been held as sports days by the inhabitants of Banff. On these occasions a few Stonies had been in the habit of attending and participating in competition with the whites. Following the visit en masse to the Banff Springs hotel, each sports day saw a few more Indians entered in the events. It was not until 1907, however, that Indian days, with native sports for Indians only were established.

In the latter year, N. K. Luxton, Dave White, J. I. Brewster, Sam Armstrong and Tom Wilson remarked on the increasing number of Indians who came to contest in these sports days. Suddenly the idea that was to have an important bearing on Banff's future summer activities occurred to one of them.

"Why not have an annual Indian sports day in which Indians only would be allowed to compete?" he asked.

The idea took with one and all of the inhabitants of Banff, and thus was born Indian Days, which later grew into a continent-wide advertised event.

Outside the town was an old race track which, not having been used for some years, had badly deteriorated. Park Superintendent Howard Douglas was interviewed and agreed to re-open it. From then on everyone who could spare the time helped. Day after day saw men of Banff out there, some hauling cinders from Bankhead, others chopping out brush or working at the many odd jobs necessary to put the grounds in shape for the Indian invasion. Gates were erected so that a small charge could be made to help defray the cost of bringing the Indians to Banff.

The first Indian Days were a success, although things were not done on the scale that they are today. The results were sufficient to warrant a continuance of the affair, so a permanent Indian Day committee was appointed, consisting of James I. Brewster, Dave White, Norman Luxton, Sam M. Armstrong and Tom Wilson. This committee of five functioned until Armstrong moved away, at which time A. K. Colbrook

joined the committee as secretary-treasurer. Since its organization the committee has been the prime mover of this yearly event and are responsible for its perpetuation. Each member of the committee has been given the unquestioned love and confidence of the Stonies, and are blood brothers of the tribe.

A little incident which gives one an idea of the esteem in which the members of the committee are held by the Indians was witnessed at a recent Indian Days meet. A group of visitors were talking to a gaily bedecked chief on the sports grounds. Someone approached and asked, "Has anyone here seen N.K.?" by which he referred to Norman K. Luxton, the busiest man on earth during Indian days. Getting no response he then addressed his query to the Indian. "You know Norman?" Proudly the chief tossed his head. "Me know Norman?" he replied, "Norman—be my brother."

Banff's Indian Days are the great holidays of the Stonies. From the time the snow disappears these children of nature count the days that must elapse before the annual "big time" arrives. "Only so many days till Christmas," says the paleface children, and with the same tone of pleasant anticipation the Stonie children say, "Only so many days till we start to Banff."

For weeks ahead the squaws are busy preparing the gaudy but magnificent costumes with which they and their braves hope to dazzle the eyes of the palefaces, if not arouse the latter's envy.

Dawns the great day when the tribe starts for Banff. Several hundred ponies, two or three hundred Indians—chiefs, braves, near-braves, squaws and papooses, accompanied by hundreds of dogs—leave the reserve, their faces turned toward the mountains. The end of the first day usually finds them encamped on Indian Flat, situated about three miles east of Canmore and eighteen miles east of Banff. About mid-afternoon of the second day the cavalcade enters the Indian grounds at the foot of Cascade mountain. In a short time the village of a hundred teepees has taken definite shape. It is semicircular in form, each band of the tribe having a section to itself, the first and most gaily decorated teepee in each section being the chiefs.

Directly the village is in shape, rations are served the Indians by the committee, and, in the past, the first of the three buffalo, donated by the government, is shot by a game warden and quickly cut up by the redskins. Unfortunately, such will not be the case this year as for some unknown reason a small herd of old buffalo which was promised to the Indian Day committee by the dominion government several years ago for such purpose, has during the past year been killed. In its place, cold storage meat from the Wainwright buffalo herd is being shipped here.

Because of the different methods of butchering employed by the Indians and whites, it might be interesting to describe the Indian method. The Indian will not allow his meat to bleed. It must be so handled that every piece contains the greatest amount of blood possible. To this end it is taken from the carcass in long slices, the knife following the tissues, care being taken that when a vein is cut the end is quickly tied. The Indian butchers work fast. About a half hour after the shot is fired there will be hardly a vestige of the lordly animal in sight. Even the little blood which has been spilt will be buried with the offal. When one considers the fact that the animal is skinned and cut up on the ground without the assistance of modern butchering instruments, and that only four men can work on it, then the skill which performs this feat is to be given credit.

The great Indian parade is held the morning after arrival. At 9:45 a.m., led by members of the committee and the R.C.M.P., the victors leave their village en route for town. Chiefs in their gaily decorated buckskins and beautiful, feathered head dresses, and mounted on gaily cap-



CHIEF SAMPSON EEAVER
(Travelling Beaver)

(Continued on Page Four)

(Continued from Page Three)

reasoned or painted cayuses, lead their bands in the display. On reaching the Bow bridge, the Stoney are lined up for judging of costumes and prizes are awarded the winners. When this small but important matter is settled the parade continues along Spray avenue to the Banff Springs hotel. After a short speech by one of the committee members, who also introduces the chiefs and their squaws to the assembled guests, the Indians return to their village and prepare for the afternoon sports.

Horse and foot races for braves and squaws, bow and arrow contests, shooting the rollers, wrestling on horseback and bronco busting are among the chief contests provided for the entertainment of the spectators.

In the evening, the entertainment takes the form of concerts in which Indian dances and songs are featured. This year the concerts will be held on the grounds of the Banff Springs hotel. Most of the Indian dances are named after birds or animals, and with the exception of the chicken dance, all or most of the tribe participate. There is one dance in which every squaw takes a partner from among the spectators for a partner, while the braves each secure a white woman to dance with. This dance is always popular with the whites and they are the most insistent for encores.

Some of the tribal songs are extremely beautiful, particularly those in which the braves sing parts which are answered by the squaws. Most of the Stoney songs are about a Good Spirit which hovers around in the form of all nature and is always coming over the mountains towards them.

A parade is held on each of the three mornings of Indian Days, with sports on the afternoons of the first and third. On the afternoon of the second day the squaws hold an "at home" in their village. Dressed in their finery they welcome their white visitors into the teepees and demonstrate their daily avocations as now performed and as performed centuries ago. The Indian hosts demonstrate bow and arrow making for the entertainment of visitors, and on this same afternoon the bow and arrow contests are held.

The medicine man's sun lodge can be visited as well as the teepees of the chiefs.

Banff business men and private citizens subscribe annually towards the fund required to bring the Stoney to the Indian Days. The three days of their stay requires several thousand dollars to finance the cost of rations alone. All gate receipts are used as prize money and if such moneys are in excess of expenses, the balance is handed to chiefs for distribution. If, as sometimes happens, there is a deficit, then members of the committee make up from their private resources. They have taught the Indians that Indian days belong to those after whom they are named, and that they, the committee are prepared to continue them. Many trips have to be made to Morley prior to the Indian days to make arrangements for the visit of the Stoney, and on each of these the committee member upon whom it falls to make the trip supplies his own expenses. Such unselfish service speaks well of the interest of the committee in the welfare of the Indians.

Tom Wilson says of the Indians:

"The Stoney were always great hunters. The buffalo was their 'general store' it provided them with teepees, beds, moccasins, fresh meat and pemican. The older members of the tribe keep alive their traditions and around their camp-fires tell the present generation stories of the hunt of years ago. Were the Stoney not brought periodically to Banff, the rising generation would not see the 'mustosch' (cattle) of their father's stories and the narratives of wonderful hunting would not mean so much to them. Thus the annual trip of the Stoney to Banff assists in keeping alive the precious stories and legends of that race. Go out to the village at some hour when the tribe is at liberty and note the number of Indians taking their small sons over to the animal corral. Follow them up and, if you understand Stoney, you will find

the fathers relating stories of past great days. Particularly will you find this so at the buffalo paddock. You will also find the youngsters are being given a first hand natural history lesson. This is one of the reasons the Stoney are brought here each year—that the younger ones may see and learn about these animals which for centuries meant life to the tribe.

"Of course, another reason is that the Stoney are naturally mountain Indians and it is a great treat for the older ones to leave their foothills reserve for a few days and visit the spot where their ancestors lived, hunted and fought and where many of them spent their earlier years.

"The Stoney were valiant hill fighters and none of their hereditary enemies, Blackfoot, Bloods and Piegan, would dare attack them in hilly or mountainous country, even though they might have overwhelming numbers. The Stoney wintered in the foothills and came into the mountains to hunt and hold their annual rites and dances. These were held at what is now known as Sundance Canyon, and there the young bucks, by enduring prescribed tortures, became braves. Sacrifices were made to the Bad Spirit that he would not be too hard on them through the hunting season, that he would not prevent them finding sufficient food for the coming winter, and that the coming winter he would not afflict them with diseases or other troubles. They believed in two spirits—the good and the bad. The former did not need appeasing as he was always doing good; the bad spirit, however, needed vows to be made to him and little personal sacrifices made for his pleasure at certain places in the mountains—at the Hoodoos, for one, the braves would leave pieces of tobacco, treasured pipes and other articles as offerings to the bad spirit, believing that they would thus gain favor from him. Thus at the yearly gathering there would be dances and sacrifices to this spirit for his kindness in having spared them through the past winter, and other dances and sacrifices to gain his favor through the coming winter."

Such scenes as Tom Wilson describes were seasonal occurrences in the valley where Banff now stands. When one remembers this, and remembering, views Banff and its surroundings today, then the true significance of Banff's Indian days and its imports stands out most clearly.

Owing to the hard times that the Indians, in common with the whites are experiencing this year, the Indian Days committee is anticipating one of the largest turn-outs in the history of the Banff Indian Days. In the past it has been found that hard times bring larger numbers of Indians who hope that by attending and participating in the sports they will be able to enhance their meagre earnings.

Among the Indians who have signified their intention of coming to the sports from a distance are Sampson and Silas Beaver with their bands. These two chiefs and their following live near Nordegg, Alberta, at the headwaters of the North Saskatchewan river about 160 miles over land from Banff. In their trek, these two Indian bands will go over the Sefeur and Pipestone Summits coming in to the Bow valley at Lake Louise. It is interesting to note in passing that Silas Beaver's daughter gave birth to a baby while on the trail here last year and that the mother and papoose both attended the Indian Day Sports.

Those attending the evening concerts of the Indian Days will be able to more thoroughly enjoy the programs than has been the case in the past. The reason is that for the first time in many years, by kind permission of the hotel management, the grounds of the Banff Springs Hotel will be the setting. Here bleachers are available and with the additional facilities of loud speakers and flood lights, everyone can be assured of a good view of the natural stage.



CHIEF SILAS ABRAHAM
(Porcupine Bull)