



**Art Libraries Society of North America, 34th Annual Conference
Fairmont Banff Springs, Banff, Alberta, Canada, May 5-9, 2006**

**Session 3: The Canadian Pacific Railway, National Parks, and the Great
Lodges of the Rockies
Saturday, May 6, 11:00-12:30 pm**

Moderator: Kathy Woodrell, Library of Congress

Speakers:

David Jones, Manager Internal Communications, Canadian Pacific Railway
The Wonder Merchants: Poster Artists of the World's Greatest Travel System

C. James Taylor, Historian, National Parks Canada
*The Architecture of the Canadian Pacific Railway Resorts in Banff and Yoho National
Parks*

Recorder: Isabella Marqués de Castilla, Library of Congress

This presentation described the magnitude of The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and its enterprises, which includes railways, steamships, and hotels. To entice tourists and visitors to western Canada, the CPR produced visually stunning artistic posters – many of these were shown using slides from the Canadian Pacific Railway archives. The planning and development of the architecture of the National Parks, which include exotic travel resorts and rustic cabins in the Canadian Rockies, was also detailed. The changes brought by exploration of the land, advent of the automobile, and cultural events impacting travel and adventure were also included in this 90 minute session.

David Jones, author of *The Wonder Merchants: Poster Artists of the World's Greatest Travel System*

From 1880-1940 the Canadian Pacific Railway produced more than 2,500 visually dynamic posters to promote immigration from Europe and to entice people to vacation in the beauty and grandeur of the Canadian Rockies. Posters were produced in many languages and with many thematic images that span such topics as farms for homesteaders to steamships from the CPR's Allan Line. Between 1915 and 1922 people from dozens of countries traveled to Canada and the United States as a consequence of widespread poster advertisement. During the next two decades the themes and style of the posters reflected changing attitudes in society and increased travel opportunities; in the 1930s men were depicted as strong and dynamic with a Soviet-like style, in the 1940s the models are portrayed with Asian characteristics.

Another important element of the CPR was the construction of several luxury hotels along the railway line. The Banff Spring Lodge was opened in 1888, just three years after Banff National Park was established in 1885. Posters of the early 1920's

depicted the lodge in its splendid setting, promoted winter sports, and depicted themes in historical perspectives. Posters produced in the 1930's and 1940's gave way to the technique of photomontage with artwork.

The speaker showed many posters used in the United States and Europe which depicted Toronto's Royal York Hotel, (largest in the British Commonwealth), Banff Springs Lodge showing the "million dollar view", and the lodge at Lake Louise. Other posters touting the Canadian Rockies portrayed women in bungalow camps and cabins that were only accessible by railway. Other common themes found in the posters were fishing, hunting, and golf.

Swiss guides were hired to guide wealthy tourists through hiking trails and to camps and cabins in the mountains. An example is the poster titled "Trans-Canada Limited" that shows the trail and lodging where people could enjoy the view and relax in a grand setting. These graphic arts depict people of middle and upper class enjoying and indulging in the 1920's and 1930's. Posters from the 1940s make evident the changes in society and women's emancipation, and include images of women golfing on the decks of ships.

Artistic posters continued to be an important advertising method well into the 1970's; with time the themes, techniques, and quality evolved. After WWII, artistic posters advertised railway, airlines, ships, hotels, and all the elements of travel and comfort.

C. James Taylor, *The Architecture of the Canadian Pacific Railway Resorts in Banff and Yoho National Parks*

Much of the architecture built by the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) resorts can be credited to New York architect Bruce Price. His achievements include the Château Frontenac in Quebec, a very successful major travel destination that is also instantly recognizable, as it has been depicted in travel brochures and posters. Price also designed several other Château-style hotels with towers and turrets; the CPR and other railway hotels adopted the architecture as a national style. Price's successor, Walter Painter, did not like the château style and incorporated his own designs, often obliterating elements considered from the Château style in later renovations. Redecoration in the 1930s of the interior spaces infuse the historic structures with opulence -- a medieval flavor with a Canadian connection.

Historic images depict grandiose views and emphasize activities for wealthy clientele such as swimming in the local mineral springs, dancing, horseback riding, and fine dining. Bruce Price's daughter Emily Price, who wrote as Emily Post, stated that the Banff Springs Hotel was "an icon of cultural commodity."

In 1890, a lodge was built on the shores of Lake Louise, another major travel destination. In 1912, Walter Painter, who had built the Banff Springs Hotel and Cave and Basin, designed and built the fireproof wing of steel and concrete with stucco-clay. It had an open "Tuscan" balcony on the top, and it is the last work he did for CPR. Many revisions to the chateau have taken place since Painter, and in the 1980s another story was added which obliterated the original "Tuscan" design.

The initial objective of the architectural designs was to provide for the best possible view from inside, but after WWI the CPR began to emphasize outdoor adventures. Swiss guides were hired to develop trails and to guide tourists and visitors on outdoor adventures. An early advertising poster depicts a female hiker, which was unusual in the early 1900s. The architecture and design of the Tea House in the vicinity of Lake Louise is an example of the influence of the Swiss variety of the rustic style. These Swiss men also built other teahouses, some of which are still in operation.

Both Banff and Yoho Parks changed with the development of the automobile. The automobile brought less formality, since travelers could visit different places on their own schedules, rather than booking an extended stay at one lodge and being dependent on railroad schedules for transport. In addition, men and women began to undertake more activities together. An example of changes in the way people traveled is depicted in a poster of the Yoho Valley bungalow camp. There was an attempt to organize the use of the camps and activities for the family such as hiking and horseback riding.

The CPR promoted the château and rustic styles with artistic posters and publications that depicted diverse themes that including Indians, chateaus, teahouses, Swiss guides, activities for the family, the beauty of the Canadian Rockies, and the Canadian way of life.

The session was attended by a large audience and sparked many questions. After the two speakers concluded their presentations, they answered questions; thereby, enhancing the overall experience and success of the event.