

Seven things you may not have known about Calgary's history



JUDY UWIERA FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

More from Judy Uwiera for the Calgary Herald ([HTTP://CALGARYHERALD.COM/AUTHOR/JUDY-UWIERA-FOR-THE-CALGARY-HERALD](http://CALGARYHERALD.COM/AUTHOR/JUDY-UWIERA-FOR-THE-CALGARY-HERALD))

Published on: October 24, 2015 | Last Updated: October 25, 2015 12:43 PM MST



The residence of William Reader in the 1930s. The city built the home for the parks superintendent as part of the Reader Rock Gardens on the hill north of Union Cemetery. Reader set the template for Calgary's green spaces. *COURTESY, CITY OF CALGARY*

Here are some highlights from Lifetime Adventures Travel's new tour of Calgary:

1. Downtown moved by rail: Inglewood was the original commercial hub of Calgary. Ottawa reserved the land west of the Elbow River (Fort Calgary) as government land. The CPR announced that their line would go through Calgary, so in anticipation of this, settlers settled east of Elbow River to be close to the rail station.
2. Moving houses across river: The CPR secretly negotiated with Ottawa to acquire a portion of the government land on the west side of Elbow River and was successful. When the announcement was made that the CPR station would be located on the west side, some of the original settlers wanting to be in the thick of things put their homes on skids and slid them across the frozen river to the west side.
3. Sandstone City: The downtown buildings were originally built from wood. In 1886 fire broke out and claimed all but one wooded building (still in existence today on 8th Avenue). After that fire, it was determined that a more fire-resistant material be used. That material was discovered in the banks of the river — sandstone. A bylaw passed that said all significant buildings had to be built from sandstone. This earned Calgary the nickname of “Sandstone City” and positioned it to become a more permanent city than other cities in the country built from wood.
4. Firefighters need their space: Fire Hall No. 1 was built to house new equipment purchased after the great fire of 1886. The locals passed the hat and raised \$500 to furnish the fire hall with desks, chairs, and beds. It was such an impressive building that the elected civic officials began to use the space for their civic business. The firefighters were upset by this intrusion and sold all the furnishings, donated the funds to the local hospital, and vacated the premises. The elected officials were left scrambling and, after a month, asked the firefighters to return and vowed to respect their space.
5. Hospital history: The original Calgary General Hospital was a rented house on 7th Avenue S.W. and had four beds. In 1894 the first “real”

hospital was built. It contained 35 beds and was a training hospital. It also had an operating room and two maternity wards. It was demolished in 1973 and today the front doors still stand and can be viewed at 12th Avenue SE.

6. Hold on to your man! Calgary newlyweds survived the Titanic sinking. Albert Dick took his new bride on a European honeymoon and had plans to return on the Titanic's maiden voyage. As the ship was sinking, all women and children were put into the lifeboats, but Mrs. Dick wouldn't let go of her husband. As a crewman passed them, he pushed Mrs. Dick into the lifeboat. As she was holding her husband so tightly, he fell in with her, thus saving his life.

7. Green planning started early: Calgary is often recognized for being a beautiful city with plenty of trees, open spaces, and gardens. This is due to the first Superintendent of Parks and Cemeteries, William Reader. He believed the city should preserve the open spaces and ordered the design of the boulevards to reflect the influence of the "City Beautiful Movement" in urban development/planning, which set the guidelines for all new developments.

For more information, go to lifetimeadventurestravel.com
(<http://lifetimeadventurestravel.com/calgary-history-tour.html>)

Calgary Flyers

THE ULTIMATE GALACTIC CONFLICT IS COMING
STAR WARS™ BATTLEFRONT™ LANDS ON TUESDAY

HOVER FOR FLYER

BEST BUY

ENTHUSIASTICALLY 100% CANADIAN!
Visions
ELECTRONICS
WRAP IT UP
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
JAW DROPPING DEALS
LIGHTWEIGHT AND ERGONOMIC
Cordless Hand Vacuum \$229
1500W 60 Video 13.1" Back Screen 15% Advanced System \$300
CABLE AND USB 3.0 CARD \$49
2-Way In-Ceiling Speakers \$148

HOVER FOR FLYER

Visions ELECTRONICS

THE FAMILY STORE
CHRISTMAS SAVINGS CENTRAL
LET'S GO HOME
\$99
\$79
\$21
\$99
\$139
\$199

HOVER FOR FLYER

THE SOURCE
I WANT THAT

HOVER FOR FLYER

THE SOURCE

Comments

We encourage all readers to share their views on our articles and blog posts. We are committed to maintaining a lively but civil forum for discussion, so we ask you to avoid personal attacks, and please keep your comments relevant and respectful. If you encounter a comment that is abusive, click the "X" in the upper right corner of the comment box to report spam or abuse. We are using Facebook commenting. Visit our [FAQ page \(http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/story.html?id=7195492\)](http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/story.html?id=7195492) for more information.

([HTTP://WWW.POSTMEDIA.COM](http://www.postmedia.com))

© 2015 Postmedia Network Inc. All rights reserved.

Unauthorized distribution, transmission or republication strictly prohibited.

Powered by WordPress.com VIP (<https://vip.wordpress.com/>)