

THE HISTORY OF GHOST DAM



Bridge over spillway Glenbow Archives NA 1644-64.

One day late in the 1920's G.A. Gaherty and G.H. Thompson, engineers and Calgary Power Limited officials, stood atop a high bank overlooking (what was then) the junction of the free-flowing Ghost and Bow Rivers and decided it was ideal location to situate a hydro-electric dam (generating power for Alberta's growing city population). Soon after there was a bustle of workmen, narrow gauge tracks and small steam engines hauling clay and gravel to build the mile-long earth dam. Today the dam supplies power to Calgary during electrical 'surge' demands.

When the first powerhouse was built, an ornamental cement wall was constructed around three sides with vents to accommodate the water run-off. In fall of 1930, high winds blew waves over the dam and the vents jammed with gravel causing the roof to collapse. Tons of water poured in, nearly drowning two employees, Bill Carle and Doug Lamont who had to swim for their very lives. Generators were overhauled, the plant repaired and production resumed.

Single men working here were "sternly but lovingly" kept in order by housekeeper, Mrs. Nisbet, during her 17-year tenure (living here with her nine children until well after the Second World War - the very first CottageClub community).



Glenbow Archives NA 3078-29.
Suspension Walking Bridge
for Workers.



Glenbow Archives NA 4477-3.



Glenbow Archives
NA 3078-31.