



“Third Siding” was established in 1883 when the railway advanced westward over the Kicking Horse Pass. The settlement’s name would soon change as the enormous financial cost of constructing the railway would send the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) on a frantic search for investors. A wealthy Chicago business man, Cyrus West Field, was viewed as a potential investor. Cyrus visited the town and the town’s name was changed to Field. However no money was ever given!

Field began as a service centre for trains tackling the 4.5% grade on the Big Hill. Workers in the yard added pusher and puller engines and disconnected the heavy dining cars for the climb east. No dining cars, meant the construction of a hotel to provide meals for passengers who disembarked while trains were being serviced was essential. Completed in 1886, Mt. Stephen House dominated the town site of Field for close to 75 years.

The spectacular scenic value of the area was soon recognized as a place worthy of protection. Mt. Stephen Park, a ten square mile reserve at the base of Mt. Stephen was established in 1886. The town itself was a displeasing mix of shacks and tents that sprouted up along the tracks promoting bootlegging, gambling and whorehouses. The CPR tried to rid the town of its unfavourable reputation in the hopes of attracting tourism to the area.



With the opening of the grand hotel, wealthy visitors riding the rails soon took note of the area and came for their health, pleasure and recreation. The CPR built a series of hotels and teahouses to accommodate their clients who wished to stay and explore.

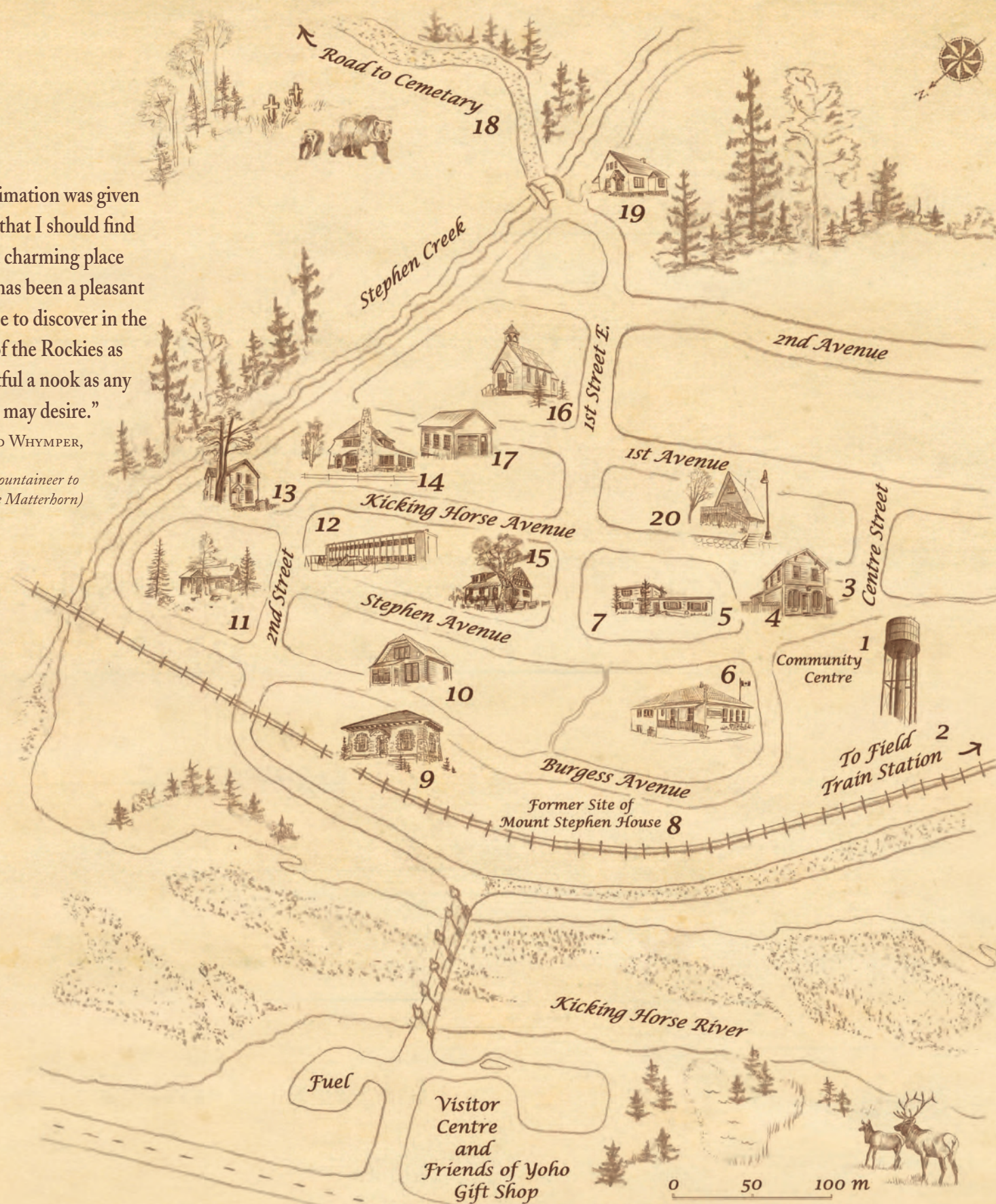
Field became a base camp for those who came to study nature, paint, write or do photography. Mountaineering parties competed for the prestige of gaining first ascents of the tallest peaks. The CPR provided Swiss Guides for less experienced climbers.

Road construction in the early 1900’s allowed access to popular areas, the Yoho Valley, Emerald Lake and Lake O’Hara by tally ho (horse and buggy). Brewster’s operated a large stable on the north side of the river (site of present day gas station) and did a brisk business in both pack trains and tally ho’s.

# Historic Sites of Field

“No intimation was given to me, that I should find Field a charming place and it has been a pleasant surprise to discover in the heart of the Rockies as delightful a nook as any person may desire.”

EDWARD WHYMPER,  
c. 1901  
(First mountaineer to climb the Matterhorn)



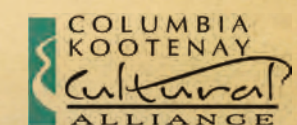
The river was named after an unfortunate incident that James Hector, a doctor, geologist and explorer for the Palliser Expedition, had. While exploring along the Beaverfoot River where it enters the Kicking Horse one of the group’s horses became fed up with having to scramble over fallen timber and jumped into the river. While trying to retrieve this horse, Hector’s own horse strayed off. Upon recapturing his horse he was kicked in the chest. The guides accompanying Hector were sure he was dead and began to bury him, but they stopped when they noticed his eye flicker. Both the river and the pass were given the name Kicking Horse.

Mining, mainly lead and zinc, was an important part of the early history. Mine portals and remnants of ladders and mining activity are visible on both Mt. Stephen (Monarch Mine) and Mt. Field (Kicking Horse Mine). Tom Wilson, an early guide in the area, staked a claim in 1882 which he sold for \$21,000 and it became the largest mining operation (Monarch Mine) in the Park. British Columbia had jurisdiction over both mining and logging until 1930 when the laws changed and the Dominion Government were given the rights to both resources. Since then no permits have been issued. Existing mines operated till 1952.

Logging began in 1884 and logs were used for railway construction and buildings in Field. British Columbia passed a Forest Reserves Act in 1906 that protected some forests and in 1915 restrictions forbade cutting green timber and any logging that would spoil the scenery. After 1930 only one logging berth remained in Yoho, in the Amiskwi Valley. It wasn’t used till a month before it was about to expire. In 1952 a mill was built and operated on and off till 1968 when all logging in the Park ceased.

Field flourished. Residents lived on both sides of the river until 1909 when a massive avalanche roared down Mt. Burgess and wiped out the settlement on the north side of the river. Strong wind gusts created by this slide broke windows in Mt. Stephen House. Surviving structures were relocated to the south side of the river. Old flower gardens and domestic trees planted by Field’s first residents can still be seen on this site.

1927 saw the completion of the first highway, the Kicking Horse Trail, that follows the now Canadian Heritage River to Golden, B.C. The opening of the area to automobile traffic promoted tourism further.







**1 CPR Water Tower** (c. 1930)  
Since 1930, the CPR Water Tower has watched over the peaceful community of Field. The 21m (70 ft.) structure represents a deeply rooted connection to the transcontinental railway and a time when thirsty steam engines stopped in for a drink. The iconic tower retired in 1952 with the introduction of diesel-electric engines.



**7 Field Café** (c. 1920)  
This building was a store in the 1920's. It sat right along the street front. In the late 40's and 50's it became a café, a gathering spot for lively discussions among town folk and CPR staff. In the 60's the building was sold to a private resident, picked up and moved back and a basement put in place. Two curling stones, weighted for specific individuals were found in the house indicating the residents enjoyed the curling rink located directly across the street.

### 8 Mt. Stephen House

Named for the president of the CPR, George Stephen, Mt. Stephen House was built in 1885. A hotel that featured a restaurant was needed in Field, as the 'Big Hill' was too steep to haul dining cars up and down. Renowned as a place of health, recreation and untamed nature, the hotel was promoted to wealthy Europeans. The impressive building housed a formal dining room that converted into a ballroom, a coffee shop, souvenir shops, a movie theatre, barbershop, poolroom, medical office and the first library in B.C. Mount Stephen House was designed by Rattenbury, architect of the B.C. Parliament buildings and the Empress Hotel in Victoria.



Once a bustling railway town, at least 12 passenger trains passed through Field each day. The 1909 register recorded a total of 8,000 guests that stayed that year. After WWI, 1918, the hotel converted into a YMCA to help accommodate CPR staff, leaving little room for the travelling public. In the 1930's, and following WWII, the tourism industry suffered, and the once majestic hotel never recovered. The Mount Stephen House closed in 1950 and was demolished in 1963.



### 9 CPR Telegraph Building

(c. 1931)  
Dots and dashes filled the CPR Telegraph Building for three decades as railway passengers sent and received telegrams during their 20-minute stopover in Field. The arrival of telephones in 1961 prompted a



new era, and the operator's busy switchboard blinked like fireflies until 1979.

### 10 CPR Log Houses

(c. 1928)  
These adjacent log houses were built by the Canadian Pacific Railway for railway officials. The CPR was the primary local employer from the birth of Field in 1883 until 1952, when diesel-electric engines replaced steam engines. Labour demands decreased with the introduction of modernized locomotives and when the sound of steam engines puffing over the Kicking Horse Pass ceased, many railway workers left town.



### 11 Boxcar House

(c. 1911–1917)  
In 1883 a local tent settlement erupted as anticipation mounted for the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway. With limited building supplies available, industrious residents transformed scrapped box cars into homes. The compact dwellings were rumored to have been drafty, especially during a legendary "Yoho Blow". Known locally as the Box Car House, this is the only remaining example in Field.



**12 Field Elementary School**  
Field's first teacher was hired in 1895, before that, unofficial teachers may have worked out of their homes.

Field's present school opened in 1960. Children attended into their high school years. Field only had one year with a grade 12 graduating class and in that class

only one girl. In following years classes were reduced and children went to Golden. The school now accommodates students from K to 3.  
The Friends of Yoho added a memorial garden in 2006 to the school yard in honor of long time resident and chief park warden, Glen Brook.



### 13 Dollhouse

(c. 1927)  
Named for its distinct resemblance to a childhood dollhouse, this structure housed the first RCMP office in Field. The RCMP relocated in 1932 and a liquor store moved in. During WWII, orders came from the nation's capital, Ottawa, to shut the place down. As the story goes, trains filled with soldiers would stop in Field to refuel and runners were sent to the liquor store. By the time the train reached Calgary, the soldiers were not in any condition for battle!



### 14 Superintendent's House

(c. 1929–1930)  
Field has played the role of a parks service centre since 1886 when 26 km2 (10 mi2) at the base of Mt. Stephen became Mt. Stephen Park. Gaining National Park Status in 1911, what we know today as Yoho National Park fluctuated in size until 1930 when the National Parks Act froze park boundaries at 1313 km2 (507 mi2). Built originally as the Park Superintendent residence, look for its mirror structure in Jasper, AB.



### 15 Old Doctor's House

(c. 1927)  
Lead and zinc extraction began in the mountains surrounding Field in 1888. The Monarch Mine (Mt. Stephen) and the Kicking Horse Mine (Mt. Field) employed 200 workers collectively during peak production. The 'Old Doctor's House' was built for the resident mine doctor, Dr. Cheeseman. He kept regular office hours at his office in the YMCA for both locals and miners alike. Mining in Yoho National Park ceased in the 1960's and the doctor moved on.



### 16 St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church

(c. 1908)  
Perched with the elegance of a winter ptarmigan, St Joseph's is a living church, open for mass during summer. Photographed throughout the years, images of the church prior to the 1950's feature a natural wood exterior. The original church bell tolls during special occasions, awakening the peaceful spirit of Field.



### 17 Mt. Stephen Golf Club - Clubhouse

Fore! By 1942 a nine hole golf course was in full swing where the Yoho Visitor Reception Centre resides today. Mount Stephen Golf Club members filled the clubhouse with stories from an era when Field boasted a curling rink, a ski hill complete with rope tow, a ski jump where international competitors soared and an outdoor skating rink – still a local favorite.

### 18 Field Cemetery

(c. 1910)  
The Field Cemetery was established in 1910 to be a final resting place for the people who have influenced the unique character of Field. Here, you will discover stories that reflect a community rooted in cultural diversity, times of triumph and tragedy, and the possibility to retrace captivating history of local mountain culture. Look for the four isolated graves in the west left hand corner – the Catholic church condemned those who committed suicide, a lone Chinese man is buried in the east left hand corner – racial prejudice. Old man Clarke insisted on being buried at an angle when he died and requested a slash line through the forest so he could keep on eye on his garage. There are people from well established families, some that have been here since the 1800's, to transients who were working on the rails.



### 19 RCMP Office and Residence

(c. 1932–1962)  
With a bird's eye view of the entire town, this home originally housed the RCMP headquarters for thirty years. A basement jail cell reminds us of a time when inmates were encouraged to find work and pay off their fines. The door to the cell remained unlocked due to fire hazard, and any prisoners deemed



dangerous were sent directly to Golden. The architecture is consistent with the Superintendent's house.

### 20 Old Church Inn

(c. 1902)  
Originally built in Donald (1886), the divisional point for CPRail, the church was torn down and relocated to Field (1902) when CPR's divisional points were changed to Field and Revelstoke. Christened Mt Stephen's Church it became home to Presbyterian and Baptist congregations. Later, United church parishioners used Mt. Stephen's

Church. After 60 years of service, the church was torn down and moved to Three Valley Gap. A new church was built and operated till the mid 80's. It was sold to a private resident in 1987, the "Old Church Inn" has been a hostel, a private residence and an approved accommodation for Yoho National Park visitors.



### Who are the Friends of Yoho National Park?

**Friends of Yoho** is a registered charity that promotes public appreciation and understanding of the natural and cultural heritage of Yoho National Park. To achieve our mandate we support and encourage many programs and projects, such as:

- Summer Institute courses offered to help you experience the beauty and wonder of Yoho National Park
- Historic Walking Tours of Field are offered many evenings throughout the summer
- We provide a scholarship for local high school students that are continuing their education in a science related field
- Offer summer speaker presentations, full moon hikes and other special Friends events
- Produce books and other items that relate specifically to Yoho National Park
- Administer a Commemorative bench program in Yoho National Park

The Friends of Yoho have helped with numerous park projects such as:

- The restoration of Deer Lodge cabin
- Rebuilding the Spiral Tunnel Observation deck
- Installed a Telonics Intrusion detection system for the Burgess Shale Fossil beds

### Friends of Yoho Gift Shop

The Friends offer a unique selection of books, maps, gifts and souvenirs. All proceeds from sales, support programs and projects in Yoho National Park. The gift shop is located in the Field Information Centre, and is open daily.

### Field Community Center

This building was formerly the Legion Hall. It is now a thriving community center bringing the town together throughout the year. It is also our emergency shelter for long power outages or road closures.



### 2 Field Train Station

(left, c. 1954; below, c. 1890)



The box car shack that reportedly housed the first train station in Field (1890's), its successor, a "proper" railway depot built from local Douglas fir in 1900, and the current structure built using limestone, show how all three train stations built at the "Third Siding" incorporated local materials.



This grey-brown rock, called Rundle stone, was mined from a now closed quarry situated on Mt. Rundle in Banff. 1991 saw the last passenger train travel through Field, ending an era of 100 plus years of public transport by car train on the CPR.



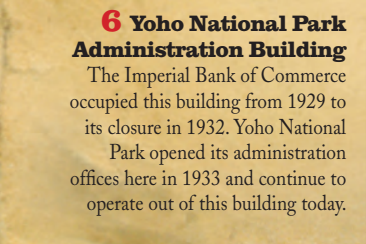
### 4 Velvet Antler Pottery Shop

(c. 1915–1920)  
As local mining, forestry, railway and tourism industries evolved, so too did the needs of this community. Behind an unassuming façade, the history of Field runs parallel to the services accommodated within this building including a drugstore (1920–1947), several grocery store operations and a WWII classroom. The soothing hum of a pottery wheel has welcomed visitors in recent years.



### 6 Yoho National Park Administration Building

The Imperial Bank of Commerce occupied this building from 1929 to its closure in 1932. Yoho National Park opened its administration offices here in 1933 and continue to operate out of this building today.



### 5 Canadian Rockies Inn

(c. 1960)  
The first store in town, called "Field's Trading Post," stood on this lot until demolition in the 1950's. The current structure was the third and final residence for RCMP in Field. When the RCMP centralized their offices in 1998, Field became part of Golden's jurisdiction and the building was sold.

