

## News Release

*"The little town that would in spite of wood"  
"A piece of Canadian history unveiled!"*

Boston Bar British Columbia, a small community in southwestern B.C . Like many struggling rural B.C communities Boston Bar, and the Fraser Canyon have turned to tourism and the service industry to help pay the bills. Although at one time home to one of the larger producing mills in Canada, which has now closed its doors, leaving hundreds without jobs. A small but dedicated group of people have given their time, wallets and hearts to keep this small community alive and beautiful.

On September 29<sup>th</sup> 2007 the community of Boston Bar would like to invite you to the grand opening of a major link to British Columbia's history, in celebration of rural B.C communities struggling to adapt to new economic conditions. Please join us. Attending are volunteers and community members of the past and present. Special guest will be Chuck Strahl MP & Minister of Native Affairs, and Northern Development, and other dignitaries.

Very important links to the history of our fine Province can be learned and experienced in the Fraser Canyon. Some of the most significant moments in British Columbia's economic history have occurred in this treacherous region, The Gold Rush to the construction of two Trans-Continental railways, the building of the Trans Canada Highway, and forestry. During these times advanced ingenuity in infrastructure for transportation was a necessity to become mobile in this rugged terrain. The most unique example of this is the Aerial Ferry which operated to link North Bend to Boston Bar allowing vehicles, freight and people to cross over the Fraser River. The only ferry of its type in North America this unique system ran 1200 feet across the canyon fully suspend on horizontal cables. The Aerial Ferry was constructed in 1939 and officially opened March 15<sup>th</sup> 1940. In 1986 this amazing piece of Canadian history was replaced with the existing bridge which was built to facilitate the increasing volume and growing need for a faster mode of transportation.

With the help of a federal grant (New Horizons Seniors Project) and donations, local volunteers and the Boston Bar/North Bend Enhancement Society, have recently finished restoring the Aerial Ferry and have set it in the Frances Harrington Park located in the heart of Boston Bar. Accompanying this historical landmark are story boards featuring photos and the history of the Aerial Ferry. Other story boards in the park, complete the setting by relating the vast history of Boston Bar and the Scenic Fraser Canyon. The park is open year round and provides an interactive rest area for travelers as they journey through this jagged landscape.

This event will be held in downtown Boston Bar in the Frances Harrington Park along the Trans Canada Hwy. September 29<sup>th</sup> 2007 Speeches will begin at 2:00 pm. For more information on this remarkable project please contact Shirley Crow at (604)867-8800.

Thank you in advance for your support

*Riley Forman*

Webmaster

www.travelthecanyon.com

info@travelthecanyon.com

# Canada's Swinging Ferry

By Dora Byron

FROM BOSTON BAR, BRITISH COLUMBIA  
Ferry fanciers can go from Boston Bar, British Columbia, to North Bend, British Columbia, in three minutes—hanging from two wires of an aerial ferry.

The ferry is the only one of its kind in North America, according to Cliff Fisher, the operator.

A little-noticed feature of a rugged part of Fraser Canyon, the free ferry is run on a year-round schedule, swinging commuters and their cars or trucks on a ski-lift ride 70 feet above the Fraser River. Many maps do not show the ferry. Natives know of it and local youngsters use it to travel back and forth to school. Some regular vacationists, especially hunters and fishermen, seek it out by an unmarked road that leads off the well-traveled

Trans-Canada Highway No. 1.

The ferry noses in and iron tracks come down with a metallic plunk. Chains are lowered for the next vehicle in line. "Notice: Shut off motor and set brakes," a sign directs. A car is piloted on. The covered tram dips as it pulls away. Then it grinds along for the short trip while the forested canyon rises fore and aft and the river churns below. The driver and passengers may stay in the car or stand by the railings at the open sides of the ferry.

"Lots of folks take the ride just for fun," says Fisher. The capacity is 40 persons, or one vehicle plus a few passengers. "Nothing much ever happens," says Fisher. Of course, sometimes the power goes off, "and we're stranded for a bit."

The ferry has been in operation since 1939, and Fisher has worked with it for 10 years. He says that he averages 10 trips per hour on busy days, and that one peak holiday he carried 11,000 passengers.

The North Bend ferry is located 28 miles south of Lytton. This is in a section, beginning at Cache Creek, where the western-bound Trans-Canada cuts sharply south from the mountains and lakes of central British Columbia. At Choate it turns west again to take a southern route to Vancouver. The 120-mile canyon area (Thompson and Fraser rivers) is an all-season vacation area with camps, lodges, historic spots, and a highway that twists through tunnels and skims along high rocky cliffs.

The best-known tourist attraction on the Fraser route is Hell's Gate. Here water rushes down from 84,000 square miles of British Columbia and surges through a narrow gorge. Fishways slow the water allowing two million sockeye salmon to move upstream each spawning season. At Hell's Gate a 28-passenger tram lifts visitors (without their cars) 500 feet above the river to a terminal on the other side, where they may eat barbecued salmon, browse through a gift shop, or just watch the water pouring by at 200 million gallons per minute.



Dangling above Fraser River.

