

## HISTORICAL BRIEF

### WATERTON-GLACIER INTERNATIONAL PEACE PARK

The Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park was dedicated seventy-six years ago to honor and symbolize the peace and goodwill existing between the United States of America and Canada. Glacier Park in the US and Waterton Park in Canada each contribute their majesty to the magnificent landscape of towering peaks, endless sky and water in a multiplicity of forms that inspired Rotarians to thoughts of peace those many years ago.

Rotarians of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Montana attended the first Goodwill meeting at the Prince of Wales Hotel in Waterton National Park July 4th, 1931 where a resolution was presented and unanimously carried to establish two parks as a permanent International Peace Park. The resolution, additionally, required a continuation of the annual, cross-cultural meetings to foster international relations.

The Rev. Conon S.H. Middleton of Cardston presented the resolution, which was seconded by Harry B. Mitchell of Great Falls, Mt.

*“Whereas one hundred members of the Rotary Clubs, representing the cities of Cardston, Lethbridge and Calgary of Alberta; Great Falls, Kalispell and Missoula of Montana and Estevan, Saskatchewan are assembled together attending an international meeting at Waterton Lakes National Park And whereas, it has been decided that a similar annual meeting be held alternately at Glacier Park, Montana and Waterton Park, Alberta. Therefore, be it resolved, that the proper authorities be petitioned to commence negotiations to establish the two parks indicated as a permanent International Peace Park, which shall be definitely set aside for this laudable purpose. Pledging our loyalty and allegiance to foster all international Relationships.”*

Negotiations were immediately started with the local representatives of the respective governments--Brig. General J.S. Steward for Alberta and the Hon. Scott Leavitt for Montana. Bills were submitted during the 1932 Legislative session in Washington D.C. and to the Dominion Government of Canada. Both national groups succeeded at their efforts to enlist the sanction of their respective governments and a proclamation was announced proclaiming the two parks as the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park.

The first peace park ceremony was held June 18th, 1932 at Glacier Park, Montana where two thousand people witnessed a program linking Glacier Park on the South and Waterton Park on the North. Sponsored by Rotary International, this impressive kick off event was attended by statesmen from both the United States and Canada and messages of greeting were delivered from both nations' capitals. An observer that day noted, “At this time, was demonstrated a feeling of peace and goodwill between the nations that will long be remembered.”

*Dedication of the Waterton-Glacier International peace Park is a further gesture of goodwill that has so long blessed our relations with our Canadian neighbors and I am gratified by the hope and faith that it will forever be an appropriate symbol of permanent peace and friendship.*

— President Hoover of the United States

*I send sincere congratulations and good wishes on the occasion of the dedication. The relationship between Canada and the United States has long been characterized by peace which is the foundation of our two democracies and by mutual respect and friendship. It is my earnest hope that this great International Peace Park stretching across our common frontier and in which citizens of both our countries may seek recreation, may forever remain a permanent memorial of all that neighborly relations should be between adjoining nations.*

— Prime Minister Bennett of Canada