

THEN/HiER Small Projects Grants Program Report – October 2009
Hudson’s Hope Museum: “Horses, Horsepower and Horsing Around”
Rosaleen Boardman, Museum Manager

Firstly, I would like to thank The History Education Network for funding the museum’s 75th anniversary celebration of the Bedaux Expedition. The initial funding payment of \$1,737 partially covered the cost of producing five interpretive panels for our summer exhibit “Our Hudson’s Hope Cowboys: Packers on the Trail – A 75th Anniversary Celebration of the Bedaux Expedition.” These panels explain the organization involved and the important role of the local cowboys on the expedition. The panels have been



professionally designed and produced and are lightweight to enable easy transportation as a travelling exhibit.

Regional and interprovincial promotion of the exhibition has drawn visitors from across Canada and the United States and raised our visitor stats by 10% this summer. Local elementary students have toured the exhibit, an especially poignant moment for one boy being the revelation to his fellow students that one of the cowboys featured is his grandpa! (The original saddle he used is also part of the exhibit.) This cowboy theme was also a feature of the Northern Region Heritage Fair held in Hudson’s

Hope with local historian and former guide outfitter Ross Peck, who demonstrated how to pack a horse and told stories of life on the trail. No doubt some of the students will be using the Bedaux theme for their heritage fair projects next year.

The museum also partnered with Jay Sherwood to edit the book *Bannock and Beans* originally published as a handwritten manuscript by Bob White, one of the cowboys on the expedition. This new edition has subsequently been published by the Royal British Columbia Museum and was launched at the University of Northern British Columbia Library and Archives and at the Hudson’s Hope Museum on July 9th. Other activities that weekend included a replica log raft being constructed and descendants of the three Hudson’s Hope cowboys floating down the Peace River to Fort St. John as part of the Paddle for the Peace event. The following day family members and friends of the cowboys (some travelled from as far as California) met at the Upper Halfway Community Hall where they viewed original film footage and then walked to the spot where two of the Citroen vehicles were filmed plunging into the Halfway River.

Work will soon commence on the online school and public education components of the project which will be uploaded onto the museum’s website, www.hudsonshopemuseum.com.

The project recently received the British Columbia Museums Association’s “Museums in Motion Award of Credit” and has garnered positive feedback from visitors:

“I made a trip up your way in September specifically to view the collection of items from the Bedaux Expedition. I was not disappointed. It was great.”

“Nice museum. Bedaux exhibit is very informative and interesting.”

“Great to see the locals featured in the Bedaux exhibit.”