
“It’s exciting. It’s a bit of a weird feeling to see your name in print, but it’s a nice end to a long project,” said Ford.

The idea started as an undergraduate study and continued in her graduate studies as a graduate thesis. The research started in 2003, but it took from 2004 to 2008 to get the thesis into book form.

Athabasca University Press accepted the manuscript about two years ago, with the book hitting bookshelves earlier this month.

“It was a lot more than I thought it would be; it’s made me a better writer, doing the revisions and seeing what people were looking for. But it was valuable,” said Ford.

Ford flew out to Vancouver to a history convention for the launch of her book, June 3, along with seven other authors from the AU Press, as they launched the press at the same time.

“The most exciting thing was meeting Vicki Gabreau, who interviewed us, and I was excited to meet one of the other authors, Jack Brink. I had read some of his work doing the research on this book,” Ford said.

Brink released a book on Head Smashed In Buffalo Jump.

“It was weird to see my book sitting there on the shelf with everyone else’s,” she said.

Ford was glad to have local support in finishing the manuscript.

“It was nice to have knowledge of the images from the area; I was able to use images from local collections,” she said. “Sometimes those images can be very costly.”

Lost Tracks is more than just a retelling of the Buffalo National Park story. It’s an in-depth story of what really happened to cause the closure of the park.

Few people know the full history of the Buffalo National Park, she said.

“I think, if you have an interest in local history, National Park history or bison, you’ll find this interesting.

“If you’re interested in knowing why the bison is an iconic image here, it explains the reasons for it,” said Ford.

Not all of the park history was rosy.

“I don’t think it’s exactly the most positive story - it was a surprise to me to learn during the research how things unfolded, some of the problems they faced at the park and how they were unable to combat some of the things they were faced with.

“I think it was a surprising outcome; the true history may be different that what people think they know,” said Ford.

The park closed in 1939 at the end of the Depression, as the Second World War loomed. The conservation of the bison was low on the government of the Dominion of Canada’s priority list. Overgrazing, disease and the lack of funding for the park all were factors in the closure of Wainwright’s Buffalo National Park.

“It looks at how the park fared on the national park level,” she explained.

The former thesis had to be revised to read more like a story, which took some time, but Ford is pleased with how it turned out.

“During the revision period I was able to keep finding stuff that I was able to use. It was quite fluid.”

Lost Tracks, Buffalo National Park 1909 - 1939 is for sale at the Wainwright museum or online at www.aupress.ca/books/Jennifer_Brower.php.

**JENNIFER FORD shows her published book, Lost Tracks, Buffalo National Park 1909 - 1939, which takes an unflinching look at the Buffalo National Park history.**

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**Lost Tracks hits bookshelves**

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**Buffalo Park history brought to life with Ford’s book**

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