



Pictured above:

Bud Brewster

Photo by William Foster

courtesy of

Annette Brewster

## Outfitting Marilyn Munroe:

Interview with Bud & Annette Brewster and Janet Brewster-Stanton

---

Below is an excerpt from *Chapter One: Bud & Annette Brewster* and their daughter Janet Brewster-Stanton interview, in the *People & Peaks of the Panther River & Eastern Slopes*. Bud Brewster was the outfitter for the movie production called *River of No Return*, starring Marilyn Munroe and Robert Mitchum.

**Sue** Bud, I understand that you worked on the feature movie called the *River of No Return*.

**Bud** Yes, I worked on the *River of No Return* with Marilyn Monroe and Robert Mitchum, but there have been various stories floating around that I will correct.

I was hired by OT (Otto) Preminger to pick out the sites for the shoot. Otto was the director and producer of this film. He was also an actor. Otto and I did this a year before the filming even started. It took us two weeks to do this. I supplied the food and horses for the Banff portion of the movie of the *River of No Return*. I also supplied food for the film production camp on the Jasper Highway.

Most of the *River of No Return* was filmed at Devona, a train station east of the town of Jasper. I had to buy a horse from the Indians. Mac Graham was there and was in charge of the Jasper operation for me. Mac Graham was also a double for Robert Mitchum.

Seventy percent of the film was made in Jasper and twenty percent in Banff. Ten percent was shot at our guest ranch at Seebe. They filmed up in the Yoho (*National Park*) too, and they did work at the Ranch near the Bow River. They moved up to Jasper after they filmed in Banff and went to Devona.

They had one photo shoot down at Seebe when they burnt down a cabin there, near Exshaw. Ester Richards was cooking on that job. The ten percent of the film that we handled at Seebe was the dangerous part. They ran the Horseshoe Rapids near the Seebe Ranch. I got the power company to lower the water level to make it safer. I used to work at the power company. The last scene was a battle with the Indians on the Bow River. Jim Brewster was also a double for Robert Mitchum in that movie. There was one shot that was taken at the Rafter Six Guest Ranch. We supplied ten head of horses for this portion of the movie.

I was involved in six different films that had film sets in the Rockies. They were produced by International Films, Fox Films and several other film companies. *Rose Marie* was filmed in Revelstoke in 1954 for the CPR when I was in my late 20s. I was also involved in another shoot with actor Randolph Scott. The film was made near Morley, Alberta and it was about an Indian attack on a train. They even brought in an old CPR train for the show.

One interesting picture was during World War I I. Some army officers decided that they had to have a winter survival session. The problem was that in order to do this, we had to buy thirty-five head of horses and break them. We needed to prepare

# Annual Edition - 2016

them for a trip to the Columbia Icefields. The production company hired a director and producer from New York. It took about six months to organize everything, and the war was close to over by the time the picture was completed.

Another small picture was done by Jack Sobel and was called *Johnny Mathis in the Canadian Rockies*. Jack Sobel had trouble getting a cast. He tried to hire Lorne Greene but he was not available. Jack finally called Karen Valentine, who was a singer and the production was successful.

The largest picture that I was involved with was *Fort Saskatchewan*. A lot of the picture was shot at Bow Lakes, but the movie was filmed both in Banff and Yoho Parks. We had a hundred head of horses and a hundred Indians in that movie. It involved twenty-five trucks and six buses. There were twenty tepees. It also took about a month to build the fort at Bankhead, about four miles out of Banff. The two main actors were Shelley Winters and Alan Ladd.

*Son of Lassie Come Home* was a short film that was shot out of Lake Louise. We left Lake Louise and rode to the Plain of Six Glaciers Tea House in Banff where we had a building. We had to build trail for about a half-mile to get all the props into the Victoria Glacier. Everything had to go by packhorse at that time, as there were no helicopters. It took about four days to get all the props in, and it only took two days to shoot the picture. The dog trainer made us pack in a dead dog for any dangerous shots. It took about twenty-five head of horses.

**Janet** One interesting story that happened during the time you were involved with *Lassie Come Home* is when this guy went down

a crevasse and saved a guy in Lake Louise because that story has been told inaccurately. Dad read an article about it and said, "That's not how it happened!"

**Annette** Bud did the rescue of the pianist at Lake Louise that fell down a crevasse. Janet was a baby when this happened, and we were living at Lake Louise. The pianist had gone out with a Swiss guide. He only fell ninety feet. There was a kid that we picked up on the trail who went down after him. We put together lash ropes and lowered the young Swiss boy in there. The wardens came after we got him out.

**Bud** The story is about a piano player who played at the Chateau Lake Louise. John Lynn and Walter Feuz, one of the Swiss guides from the Chateau Lake Louise were climbing on the Victoria Glacier when they dropped through the snow. Walter hung on and John went down to the end of the rope that both were tied to. Walter didn't have the strength to pull John out so he had to cut the rope and let his partner down. John went down about ninety feet and caught a ledge. Walter started walking back to the Plain of Six Glaciers Tea House and got help from a guide who was out with a party of five or six people. Walter instructed the guide to go over to the corral and get a hold of me.

Now it was up to me to organize a rescue off of the Victoria Glacier for John Lynn. I closed our operation down for the day and went to work. We gathered up about 125 feet of rope and left the corral with all the staff we had. There was seven staff and myself—the rescue chief. I even got the hotel doctor to come and assist on the trip. On our way to the site, we picked up a young Swiss boy. He joined our group and followed me,

as I knew the trail to where we were going because I had been involved in cutting the trail to the glacier for the movie company that was filming *Lassie Come Home*. You could ride a horse right to the edge of the ice flow. It wasn't long before we arrived at the snow bridge. I was the first to the site, so I hollered down and said, "John, are you down there?"

He recognized my voice and hollered back, "Get me out of here, but I don't want you to come down!" So the young Swiss boy offered to go down. We tied all the ropes together and the crew lowered him down. He tied John on, and the crew pulled him out. The doctor took over after we had him safely out of the crevasse. The Park wardens showed up when all was said and done. They took him down to the Plain of Six Glaciers Tea House where he remained during the night. The doctor told John that he would not likely have survived any longer down that hole.

**Sue** Did you work on any other films in later years?

**Bud** No, Parks Canada eventually made a rule that there would be no more major films or documentaries shot in their jurisdictions, so we really lost a lot of opportunities in later years.

**SHOP FOR BOOKS at:**

[WillmoreWilderness.com](http://WillmoreWilderness.com)

[PeopleandPeaks.com](http://PeopleandPeaks.com)

[AlbertaRockiesAdventures.com](http://AlbertaRockiesAdventures.com)

**PayPal accepted**