

Calgary centennial

An eight-cent stamp to commemorate Calgary's centennial this year was issued on July 3.

The stamp, designed by Bernard Reilander from Walt Petriego's photograph *Untamed*, portrays a wild horse being roped and saddled by wranglers.

The spirited horse on the Calgary centennial issue depicts, possibly, the most accurate image of the past and present of this city, which is situated near the foothills of the Canadian Rocky Mountains. The wild-horse race is one of the major events in the annual Calgary Exhibition and Stampede, taking place this year from July 3 to 12.

The herds of wild horses that once roamed the prairies have all but disappeared, replaced by the nodding rockers, derricks and pipelines of the oil industry which, combined with agriculture and tourism, provide a prosperous base for the economy of Southern Alberta.

Calgary's roots were established in 1875, when Inspector A.E. Brisebois, head of the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) in the territory, saw the need for an outpost between Forts Walsh and MacLeod to the south and the fledgling settlement of Edmonton to the north. The Bow and Elbow Rivers provided transportation to the east and west; the hills provided shelter from the icy blasts of winter.

Growth in the little settlement was



The foothills of the Rockies form a backdrop to the City of Calgary, Alberta.

slow at first, but in 1883 the railroad came to Calgary and, from the day the first trainload of settlers arrived, Calgary's future was assured.

Settlers found the rich earth of the prairies ideal for the ranches and farms that became the base of one of Alberta's biggest industries – agriculture. While beef and grain were the mainstay of the early economy, the activities of farming and ranching provided a framework for recreation.

The range became a playground, as well as a working ground, where skills

were tested – man against man and man against animal. The roots of the Stampede were set in 1884 with the first exhibition of Calgary's Agricultural Society. In 1912, showman Guy Weadick introduced the idea of a rodeo and, after various changes of name, the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede was incorporated in 1933. Today it enjoys an international reputation for



outstanding rodeo competition, chuckwagon-racing and high jinks.

Calgary made a strong bid to become the capital when Alberta became a province in 1905, losing out to Edmonton despite allegations that that city was "too close to the North Pole". The friendly rivalry between the two cities still exists.

Oil was discovered in the Thirties in the Turner Valley, south of Calgary, and in 1947 the major fields at Leduc were tapped. The boom was on and by 1950, Calgary had become the centre of a rapidly-expanding petroleum industry.



Among the main features of the Calgary Stampede are the chuckwagon races.