



You are here : [Home](#) > [People](#) > [Communities of the Athabasca](#) > **Bitumount**

[RAMP](#)[RIVER](#)[PEOPLE](#)[RESOURCES](#)[ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT](#)

## Bitumount

Bitumount was the first commercial oil sands separation and refining operation along the bank of the Athabasca River. In 1923, Robert C. Fitzsimmons acquired the International Bitumen Company later shortened to Bitumount, located 90km north of Fort McMurray on the east side of the Athabasca River (OSDC website 2007b). In 1930, Fitzsimmons started producing bitumen froth with a seven person crew (OSDC website 2007). The bitumen sold for waterproofing roofs, printers' ink, lubrication oils, rust and acid-proof paints, street paving, and fence post preservative (OSDC website 2007b). The Bitumount plant was forced to close due to financial difficulties in 1941 (OSDC website 2007b). Over the next 25 years the Bitumount site had several new owners and name changes. In 1974, Bitumount was declared a Provincial Historic Site (OSDC website 2007b).

[Next page: Fort Chipewyan](#) ►



**Bitumount Alberta ca. 1948**

Source: *University of Alberta Archives*(image 91-137-017)  
( [click to enlarge](#) )



**Bitumount Plant ca. 1949**

Source: *University of Alberta Archives*(image 91-137-172)  
( [click to enlarge](#) )

[Website Terms Of Use](#)