

TRAILS & TALES

Newsletter of the Forest History Association of Alberta

Fifth Annual General Meeting held March 18, 2009

The FHAA held its fifth annual general meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 2009 at the Coast Edmonton Plaza with twenty-eight members in attendance. Bob Udell and Rick Arthur were introduced as guest speakers for the evening. President Arden Rytz was unable to attend and Treasurer Bruce Mayer provided the introductions and overview of the previous year's activities and plans for the future. Past activities included funding to the Foothills Research Institute on the publication of the book *Mountain Trails*, memoirs of an Alberta Forest Ranger in the Mountains and Foothills of the Athabasca Forest 1920-1945, Jack Glen's story; and partnering with the Foothills Research Institute on the development of a DVD entitled *The Roots of the Present Lie Deep in the Past*, a historical perspective on North American Forestry policies and practices. Mayer provided an overview of a website that is under development for the FHAA. It is anticipated the new website will be up and running in 2009. One future project the FHAA



Left to Right: Lou Foley, Cliff Smith and Butch Shenfield

is working on is a physical, historic and photographic history of old Dominion and Alberta Forest Service patrol cabins and ranger stations. Lowell Lyseng has developed an initial spreadsheet identifying 275 sites to be investigated from a review of 1956, 1967 and 1984 map sources. The 2008 financial statement was presented and accepted. Elections were also held for three executive positions, with Cliff Henderson, Bob

Newstead and Arden Rytz being re-elected. Arden Rytz and Bob Newstead retired from their President and Secretary duties and will continue to support the executive as FHAA directors. FHAA directors will meet in early 2009 to nominate a new President and Secretary. In the mean time Peter Murphy will act as President, and Bruce Mayer will act as Secretary. Congratulations were given to the two members for their role on the FHAA executive. Door prizes consisted of history books and CDs and a fleece jacket donated by the College of Alberta Profes-

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Left to Right: Peter Murphy, Michelle Shesterniak and Rick Arthur



Left to Right: Cliff Smith, Trevor Wakelin, Fred McDougall, Con Dermott and Darrell Latimer

Fifth AGM attended by 28 members

sional Forest Technologists.

The initial evening presentation consisted of viewing the National Film Board DVD, *Water for the Prairies*. This 1951 Lawrence Cherry film looked at measures to preserve water flow from the Rocky Mountains and provided an overview of the Alberta Forest Service and the Eastern Rockies Forest Conservation Board. AFS Rangers Robin Huth and Bill Shankland were included within the documentary.

Following the movie Bob Udell presented an overview of projects undertaken through the Foothills Research



Bob Udell holding a copy of *The Resilient Forest*, a 2007 publication

Institute Adaptive Forest Management/History Program. The book *Mountain Trails* and the CD *The Roots of the Present Lie Deep in the Past* were but two of the recent successes of the program, both with funding from the Forest History Association of Alberta. Further information can be found at

the Foothills Research Institute website, www.foothillsresearchinstitute.ca.

Rick Arthur drew the last slot for the evening and gave a great presentation on the Mountain Legacy Project. From the 1880s through the 1950s surveyors with the Geological Survey of Canada, the Department of the Interior's Dominion Land Survey, and other government departments conducted photo topographic surveying of the mountains in Western Canada. The images left a



Rick Arthur and the Mountain Legacy Project presentation



Left to Right: John Collins, Andy Gesner and Grant Sprague

legacy of systematic photographs with nearly complete coverage of much of the landscape. Over 140,000 glass plates have been discovered in archives, with most residing in the National Archives of Canada. Students working on the project retrace the steps of the early surveyors and take a series

of high resolution digital 'repeat' photographs. Interesting differences are then visible when comparing the photographs, showing a snapshot of then and now. Further information on the Mountain Legacy Project can be found at the University of Victoria hosted website, <http://mountainlegacy.uvic.ca>.



Eleanor and Adele Claydon. Eleanor is the daughter and Adele is the granddaughter of Forest Ranger Dexter Champion.



Forest Ranger Dexter Champion was born and raised on his family's homestead, about seven miles west of Priddis. He started his career with the Alberta Forest Service in the spring of 1931 as a seasonal lookoutman on Moose Mountain

Lookout, where he took his young bride Louise, spending three and a half seasons. In 1934 Champion became patrolman at Kananaskis Lakes, later becoming Assistant Ranger there for the following three years. He moved successively to the Ghost River, Castle River and Cypress Hills districts before becoming Chief Ranger at Rocky Mountain House in 1947 and Timber Inspector at Athabasca in 1950. He helped to develop forest fire prevention training at the early Forestry Training Schools when they were held in Kananaskis.

In 1956, Champion moved to Hinton to join the new North Western Pulp and Power Ltd. pulp operation as forest fire prevention officer. He held that position for 11 years, then moved up to Mill Safety Supervisor and finally Fire Chief before his retirement in 1965. Besides his many professional contributions during his "Forestry" days with North Western Pulp and Power Ltd., he gave generously of his time to public service causes including the Boys Scouts, which he also served as a Commissioner; Chamber of Commerce as member and president; and Kiwanis as a promoter of the Yellowhead Highway as the second Trans-Canada Highway.

Bruce Mayer, Treasurer of the FHAA

Bruce started his career with the Alberta Forest Service in 1979 on a trail maintenance crew, constructing bridges and improving trail drainage for off-highway vehicle use in the Ghost Ranger District. Also initiated that summer was the construction of the Fallen Timber Campground, a campground designed especially for access and use by individuals with 4x4s, trikes and various motorcycles, including 'trials' bikes. The object of trials riding was for the rider to negotiate man-made or natural obstacles (rocky trails, creek banks, picnic tables, rock barriers, etc.) without the riders feet touching the ground; most all the time at a very slow rate of speed.

Mayer switched from business at the University of Calgary to forestry, and Mayer graduated from NAIT's Forest Technology Program in 1983. Seasonal work further included member and leader on the Canmore Ranger District Kananaskis Initial Attack Crew from 1981 to 1984; foreman of the Kananaskis fuel modification crew during the winters of 1983 and 1984; and seasonal forest recreation guardian in the Ghost Ranger District during the summers of 1985 and 1986. Although plenty of seasonal work was available, the early 1980s hiring freeze didn't allow

for a permanent posting as a Forest Officer until 1986 in Fox Creek.

Mayer moved to Calling Lake as the Forest Officer III in 1992 and subsequently became the Senior Ranger and then Forest Area Manager in Athabasca before moving to Whitecourt as the Fire Manager in 2000. In April 2002 Bruce moved to Edmonton as the director of the Wildfire Policy and Business Planning Branch. In April 2003 a Departmental secondment saw Bruce take on the newly created Consultation Team Lead working with a half dozen other ministries in the development of the provincial First Nation consultation policy.

In 2005 Mayer returned to Forest Protection where he was the Acting Director Forest Protection Branch in 2006, Director Forestry Business Services Branch from January 2007 to December 2008, and most recently Executive Director Forest Protection Branch.

Bruce is married to Elaine and they have three children, a boy and two girls, the youngest who graduated Grade 12 in spring 2009. Bruce is an ardent history fan and chaired the steering committee for the publications of the *Alberta Forest Service history book Protection and management of Alberta's forests, 1930-2005*.



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Sign up today to be part of Alberta's only Association dedicated to perserving and promoting our unique forestry heritage.

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Forest History Association of Alberta
22 Hutchinson Place, St Albert, AB T8N 6R3
www.albertaforesthistoria.ca

For more info contact Bruce Mayer

Ph: (780) 644-4656
E-mail: bruce.mayer@gov.ab.ca
FHAA@albertaforesthistoria.ca

Recent forestry retirements

Revie Lieskovsky



On November 15, 2008 friends and family gathered to toast Revie into retirement after 26 years with the provincial government; this on top of Revie's 16 years with the Canadian Forest Service. Revie graduated from the first NAIT Forest Technology program held in Hinton in 1966. His early career was spent as a researcher with the CFS working on prescribed burns, fire weather indices and retardant mixtures and airtanker drop patterns; information that is still used today as a basis for the current aerial firefighting program. Revie was instrumental in developing a top notch airtanker and rappel program for Alberta. He retired as Director, Wildfire Operations.

On December 31, 2008 Murray retired after 44 years in the forest industry, the last 35 here in Alberta. A graduate of UNB in 1964, Murray was Woodlands Manager in Whitecourt with Simpson Timber, later Blue Ridge Lumber, and spent twelve years as Chief Forester for West Fraser Mills Ltd. Murray has also been an active volunteer spending 20 years with the school division and over 30 years involved in hockey in Alberta, as a coach, mentor coach, clinic instructor and scout. Murray was awarded the 2007 Meritorious Award by Hockey Alberta for his dedication and commitment. Murray was the first president of Alberta Registered Professional Foresters Association and leaves a long legacy of forest management accomplishments in the province.



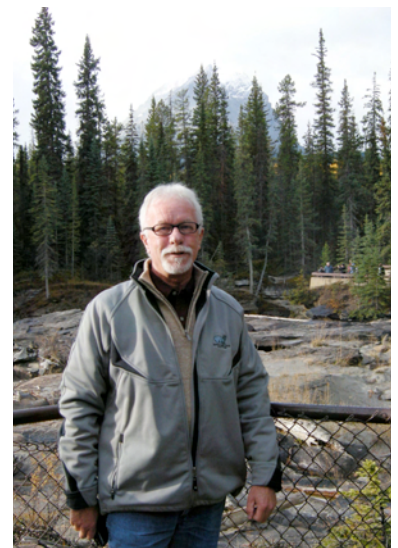
Murray Summers

Daryl D'Amico



Daryl graduated from the University of Missoula in 1969 and began working with the Alberta Forest Service forest management planning section under Charlie Jackson. Other graduates at the time were Tony Sikora, Dennis Quintilio, Dennis Dube, Don Fregren, Jim Nowasad, Garry Leithead, Peter Murphy and Con Dermott - heck of an alumni! Daryl moved to Hudson Bay, SK to work for Simpson Timber and then to Whitecourt in 1974 when Simpson Timber was awarded their FMA. Daryl worked for Simpson Timber, and later Blue Ridge Lumber and West Fraser Mills as a management forester until his retirement.

On May 23, 2009 another forestry retirement party was held with Don Harrison retiring after 35 years with the department. Don's career spanned many roles and locations from Forest Officer in Rocky Mountain House, Slave Lake, Blairmore, Lodgepole, Nordegg to Timber Management and Forest Protection Technician in Calgary, and Forest Area Manager in Hinton. Don moved to Edmonton as the Manager, Wildfire and Aviation in 2000 and helped coordinate the response to the 1999 Alberta Fire Review. With the reorganization in 2001, Don became the Director of Wildfire Service Branch, later Forest Protection Branch. The last eight months Don was Acting Assistant Deputy Minister of Forestry Division. Don is currently working with the State of Jalisco, Mexico on the development of a wildfire management program.



Don Harrison

Donations of Prints: George Schultz and Bob Guest

The Forest History Association of Alberta is proud to acknowledge recent donations received. On August 14, 2008 George Schultz donated an original oil painting of Copton Lookout painted by artist and friend Robert Guest in 1966. On October 23, 2008 artist Robert Guest donated an original oil painted he had recently finished of Kvass Lookout.



Above: Copton Lookout painted by Robert Guest, 1966

Right: Helen and George Schultz with painting in background



Above: Bruce Mayer accepting painting of Kvass Lookout from Bob Guest

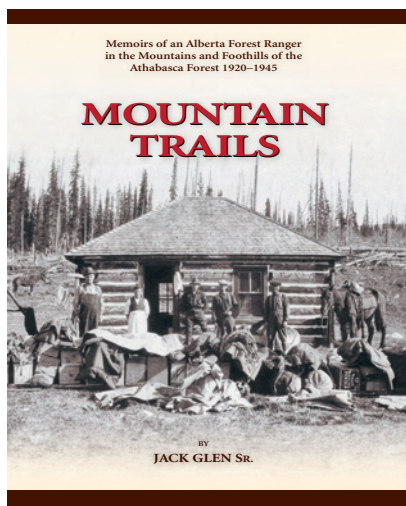
Right: Robert and Myrtle Guest



Hot off the wire



Mountain Trails – Jack Glen Sr.



Jack Glen (1891-1983) was a farm hand, wrangler, railway builder, police officer, forest officer, firefighter, artist, writer, inventor and gardener over his long life and varied career.

This book tells the story of a 25 year chapter of that career, commenc-

ing when he left the Royal Northwest Mounted Police force to become a Dominion Forestry Branch (and later Alberta Forest Service) ranger in the frontier community of Entrance.

His story is full of adventures, colourful characters, and the challenge of bringing law and order to a previously untracked and mostly uninhabited wilderness. This story of the early roots of forest management and administration in Alberta also provides compelling insight into the nature, the character and the daily struggle of the men and women who lived and worked at the very edge of civilization as we now know it.

This book can be purchased through Foothills Research Institute for a cost of \$35.00 CDN (soft cover) or \$50.00 CDN (hard cover) plus shipping and handling. Please contact Fran Hanington by phone at (780) 865-8330 or by email at fran.hanington@gov.ab.ca if you are interested in purchasing this publication.

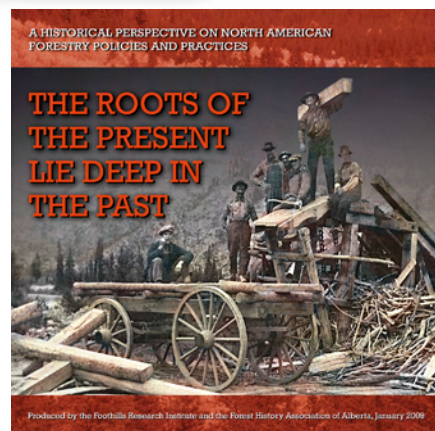
Forest History Association of Alberta members are eligible for a 25% discount on their purchase.

The Roots of the Present Lie Deep in the Past

From October 2-6, 2004 over 1,500 delegates attended the joint Canadian Institute of Forestry/Society of American Foresters convention and annual meeting at the Shaw Convention Centre in Edmonton, Alberta. This CD contains the voiceover and PowerPoint from the October 4 plenary session on forest policy and forest history: "*The Roots of the Present Lie Deep in the Past*". The speakers in order were Charles Kay,

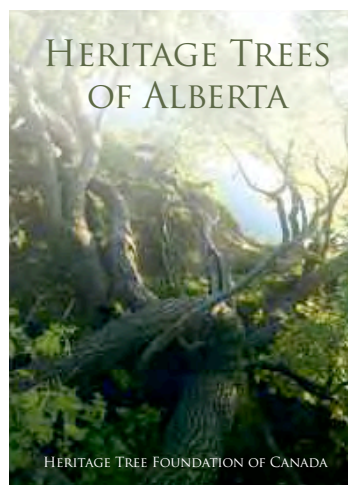
Adjunct Professor in Political Science at Utah State University; Cliff White, Manager of Heritage Resources Conservation in Banff National Park; Tom Maccagno, a lawyer and Western Canadian historian from Lac La Biche;

Char Miller, Professor of History from Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas; and Peter Murphy, Professor Emeritus, Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry of the University of Alberta.



Heritage Trees of Alberta

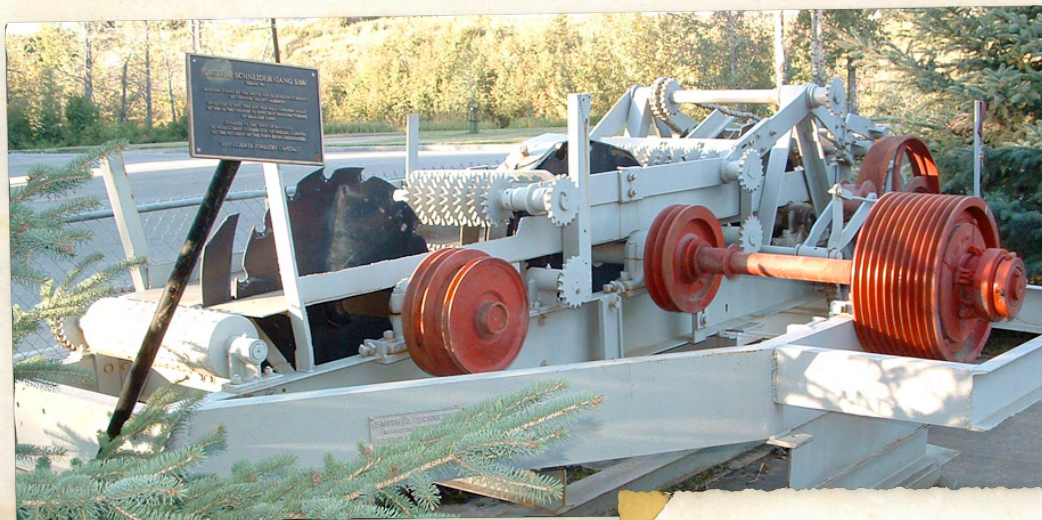
In September 2008 the Heritage Tree Foundation of Canada published the remarkable book *Heritage Trees of Alberta*. With hundreds of volunteers and over 900 tree nominations, managing editor Libby Fairweather and organizers put together a comprehensive collection, complete with maps and historic and personal stories of the heritage trees. The book follows in the traditions of the Alberta Forestry Associations Trees of Renown project and publications, and the heritage tree project undertaken in Ontario. Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) and the Forest History Association of Alberta are



working with the Heritage Tree Foundation on a joint database for the Heritage Trees of Alberta and the Trees of Renown.

Heritage tree nominations can be made on both ASRD and Heritage Tree Foundations websites (www.srd.gov.ab.ca/forests/trees-of-renown.aspx and www.heritagetreefoundation.com/index.htm).

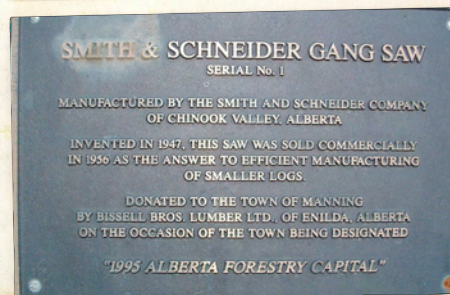
To order your copy of *Heritage Trees of Alberta* go to www.heritagetreefoundation.com/publication.htm.



Bissell Brothers Lumber of Enilda donated this gang saw to the town of Manning for its 1995 Alberta Forestry Capital designation. Tim Klein remembers hauling the gang saw to Peace River with Chief Ranger Phil Dube. Peter Wiebe, the Alberta Forest Service mechanic foreman, then sand blasted, painted and prepared the gang saw for display. This gang saw was manufactured by the Smith and Schneider Company of Chinook Valley, Alberta.



Stan Hughes and Bob Steele with the newly acquired Dornier CF-AFB fixed wing aircraft, 1964



L to R: Art Peter, Peter Nortcliffe and Art Evans standing in front of monster Douglas Fir, Crowsnest area, 1980s



L to R: Ted Hammer, Reg Loomis, Des Crossley, Frank Platt and Ryan Krause viewing a new Bell 47J helicopter on display at a Canadian Institute of Forestry, Rocky Mountain Section meeting, late 1950s



The Upper Saskatchewan Ranger Station from the late 1950s before Abraham Lake was created. Butch Shenfield was able to take a repeat of the same location in June 2009 while the damn was low in water. Note the foundations in the foreground of the picture.



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Please send story ideas to
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