

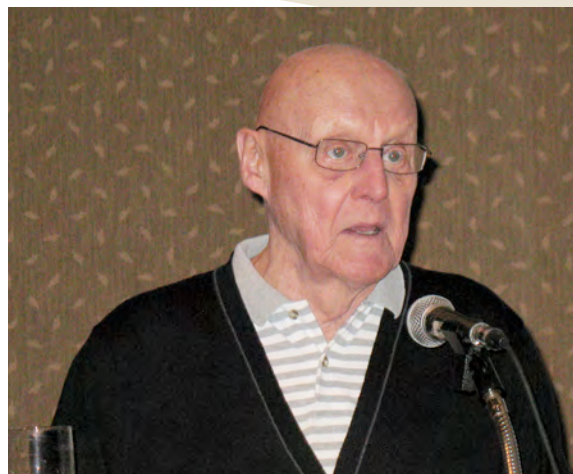
# TRAILS & TALES

Newsletter of the Forest History Association of Alberta

## Arden Rytz, founding member and first president passes away

Forestry lost a good friend and champion with the passing of Arden Rytz on January 28, 2010. Arden, who was 87, lived in Edmonton with his wife Sophie. He received his forestry degree from the University of British Columbia in 1950. His remarkable career as a forester started during summers with the Canadian Forest Service, then to permanent employment with the Imperial Lumber Company looking after their seven lumber operations in Alberta. Arden's greatest contributions occurred during his association with and employment as Executive Director of the Alberta Forest Products Association of Alberta.

A celebration of Arden's life will be held at a date still to be set.



*FHAA President Arden Rytz providing opening remarks at the 4th AGM in March 2008*

## 6th Annual General Meeting to be held March 17, 2010

Join us at the Coast Edmonton Plaza for the 6th Forest History Association of Alberta annual general meeting. Please note the January 1, 2010 membership renewal had the wrong date of Thursday March 17,

2010 – the correct date is WEDNESDAY March 17, 2010.

Meeting format will be similar to those in the past, will start with required business of the association (updates, financial report and elec-

tion of 3 directors) and will finish the evening off with short history presentations, including some 'home' movies. This year's elections will also include filling the vacancy created with the passing of Arden Rytz.

## JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY! FOREST HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

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

Yearly membership fees are:

\$25 - Individual  
\$40 - Family  
\$250 - Corporate

Name (individual or company): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of spouse (family membership): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

High speed ☐ Dial up ☐

### Send your application and fees to:

Forest History Association of Alberta  
22 Hutchinson Place, St Albert, AB T8N 6R3  
[www.albertaforesthstory.ca](http://www.albertaforesthstory.ca)

### For more info contact Bruce Mayer

Ph: (780) 644-4656  
E-mail: [bruce.mayer@gov.ab.ca](mailto:bruce.mayer@gov.ab.ca)  
[FHAA@albertaforesthstory.ca](mailto:FHAA@albertaforesthstory.ca)

# Rytz a champion of forest management

**Reprinted from the August 2007 FHAA newsletter (small revision made)**

Raised and schooled in Edmonton, Arden served in the Air Force as a radar mechanic in both the United Kingdom and Southeast Asia. In 1950 Arden graduated from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver with a forestry degree.

He spent his summers gaining experience working with the Canadian Forest Service at the Kananaskis Forest Experimental Station during the summers of 1947 and 1948. The summers of 1949 and 1950 were spent in northern Alberta doing a variety of studies in tree growth and forest inventory.

In September 1950 Arden was hired by Imperial Lumber Company of Edmonton as a forester for their seven operations in the province.

At that time, these operations ranged from Rocky Mountain House in the south, to Marlboro in the Edson Forest, Athabasca, Lac La Biche, Kinuso, Barrhead, Blue Ridge and eventually Grande Prairie, Topely and Burns Lake in B.C. In 1955, Arden was made production manager of the Imperial operations, with expansions occurring in the Grande Prairie and Footner Lake Forests. Arden stated that during the period from 1955 to 1960 'Imperial Lumber Company was the only operation in Alberta to produce over 100 million board feet of lumber in one year'. During this time he was also appointed vice-president of Imperial's Quality Spruce Mills in Topley, B.C.

While he was with Imperial Lumber, Arden was very active in the Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA), serving as president from 1963 for three terms to 1966. During that period, as a member of the Forestry Liaison Committee, he prepared the



*Arden Rytz cruising timber and doing growth and yield studies in Quates valley for the Canadian Forest Service, Kananaskis, 1948*

brief that the Association presented to its membership asking it to accept the concept of timber tenure that would lead to the Quota System. Arden recalled vividly how pleased he was the Association Membership unanimously voted to approve this approach to government at the 1964 Annual Meeting. The presentation by the Association on this brief to government, ended up with the establishment of the Quota System in 1966.

In 1967 Arden left Imperial Lumber to take the position of staff forester with the Northern Interior Lumbermen's Association in Prince George, B.C. where he worked for about eighteen months on new lumber grading standards.

As a result of efforts of some members of the Alberta Forest Products Association, Arden and his

family were lured back to Alberta in 1968 where he was asked to take over as manager of the AFPA.

Arden held that position, later Executive Director, for 20 years until his retirement in 1989. During Arden's tenure, major changes to the timber management regulations were made to address new procedures such as weight scaling, metric measurement, and inventory volumes in respect to timber cut below a 10 inch diameter stump. Regeneration standards were developed which are now periodically amended and updated.

In 1972 Arden felt privileged to represent the forest products industry along with Bob Steele, deputy Minister of Lands and Forests representing the government, on a trade mission to Japan, hosted by Premier Lougheed, then Premier of the Province of Alberta. This mission was the forerunner to many negotiations and visits that led to greatly expanded

**Cont'd on Page 3**



# A distinguished career in Alberta forestry



*Arden Rytz, chair of the Canadian Institute of Forestry, Rocky Mountain Section, 1971-72*

trade.

Arden also spent many hours representing forest industry's position on timber harvesting on public lands to the Environmental Council of Alberta during their 1978 hearings for their 1979 report. Arden and Bob DeGrace were instrumental in the formation of the Canadian Lumber Standards Accreditation Board, and subsequent formation of the National Lumber Grades Authority. Arden was also the Canadian liaison on the American Lumber Standards Committee with the US Department of Commerce. The Canadian Wood Council recognized his efforts in 1989 with the prestigious Paul Bunyan award.

In 1987 at the AFPA Annual Meeting, members agreed to expand membership to include the panel board and pulp and paper industries, a step for which Arden had long advocated. A detailed proposal was approved in 1988, thereby creating his 'one voice' for forest industry. Arden retired the following year.

Arden had always participated in volunteer forestry organizations. A 50-year member of the Canadian Institute of Forestry, he was active in the Rocky Mountain Section, in 1971-72 serving as Section Chairman and a Councillor 1956-59, 1969-70 and 1982-83. He was also an early and effective proponent of the Registered Professional Foresters Association in Alberta and was one of the ten charter members of the prototype RPF association when legislation was passed in 1985.



*Canadian Institute of Forestry, Rocky Mountain Section meeting, Red Deer, 1952. (L to R): Arden Rytz, Des Crossley, John Hogan, Jack Devlin, Reg Loomis, Eric Huestis (in shadows), not identified (coffee cup)*

Arden was also elected to terms on the Board of Directors. Arden was subsequently recognized with designation as RPF 001 of the Alberta Registered Professional Foresters. Also interested in the history of forestry, Arden became a charter member of the Forest History Association of Alberta in 2004 and was elected as its first President, serving to 2009.

Following retirement, Arden and Sophie continued to travel and spend quality time with their children and grandchildren at their cabin at Muriel Lake. Even there, Arden was active in a local committee to maintain the environmental quality of the Muriel Lake area.

Arden was born March 10, 1922 and passed away January 28, 2010. He and Sophie were married in May 1952. They had three children, Curtis a dentist in Calgary who has two daughters, Ardene, a dental assistant in Victoria who has one daughter and Brad who they lost in 1996.

Arden was a strong champion of sustainable forest management in Alberta, and had a deep interest in saving, promoting and sharing our valuable forest history.



*Four influential foresters of the time. (L to R): Des Crossley, North West Pulp and Paper; Reg Loomis, Alberta Forest Service; John McLanahan, Canadian Forest Service; and Arden Rytz, forest industry*



*(L to R): Arden Rytz, Bob Udell and Butch Shenfield, looking through the 'treasure trove' of history that Butch has collected, March 2007 FHAA AGM*

# Jack (John) Holden – Forest Ranger in Wabiskaw (Wabasca)

*Excerpts taken from the Land Forest Wildlife magazine, Spring 1965, Vol. 8, No. 1*

The community of Wabasca is 300 kilometres north of Edmonton within what was the Slave Lake Forest and now Lesser Slave Area. Forest Rangers have been in the community for years doing fire suppression, game guardian and general forestry and land administration duties. The following is a story of one individual, Jack (John) Holden.

To the district of Wabiskaw in 1942 came a slight, quiet, English born forest ranger named Jack Holden. Twenty-two years later, in November 1964, he retired from public service. A diary of his term of duty is a fascinating story of semi primitive official service. All of it and Jack, the central character, represent enough material for a most unusual biography.

Jack arrived at a home-  
stead about 50 miles  
north of Edmonton with  
his parents in 1904.  
When he grew up and  
sought work he reached  
the logging camps in the  
Slave Lake region and  
mixed a variety of logging  
jobs, including the old  
style “river drives”, with  
trapping. He seemed  
destined to earn his living  
in Alberta woods; a destiny  
confirmed by subsequent  
events.

During his logging employment Jack became a firefighting foreman and in this role caught the eye of a forest superintendent. Shortly his firefighting services were engaged more directly when he joined the Slave Lake ranger staff. Following a brief headquarters indoctrination period he was dispatched

to Wabiskaw where he remained for the duration of his employment.

A forest ranger stationed at Wabiskaw and, for that matter, at many other Alberta points, especially during the 1930s and 40s, needed the courage to act independently. He was required to apply forestry and fish and wildlife regulations in many different circumstances and without the necessity for seeking precedent or advice at headquarters. Indeed headquarters was often so remote it might not be reached in time to provide effective support. The ranger in such situations, and Jack Holden was one, had almost invariably to act on his own initiative. This kind of duty soon “separates men from boys”.

In time Jack Holden became a totally accepted member of the community of Wabiskaw by the

native inhabitants. So accepted, in fact, that he eventually became an important counsellor to many of them. At the time of his retirement he knew possibly more about the personal lives of his woodlands associates than anyone in his district.

After many trips on foot, by canoe and on horseback to the most remote sections he became familiar with every corner of his terrain. A ninety-mile hike to the settlement at Smith was a normal jaunt. Jack could make the trip handily with two “sleeps”. When he set out with a crew to investigate a “smoke” he led them with confidence, knowing the shortest and easiest routes and packing his own gear on his back along with the rest of the team. Today he



*Ranger John Holden and two important means of conveyance, his birch bark canoe and snowshoes. Both articles are hand crafted.*



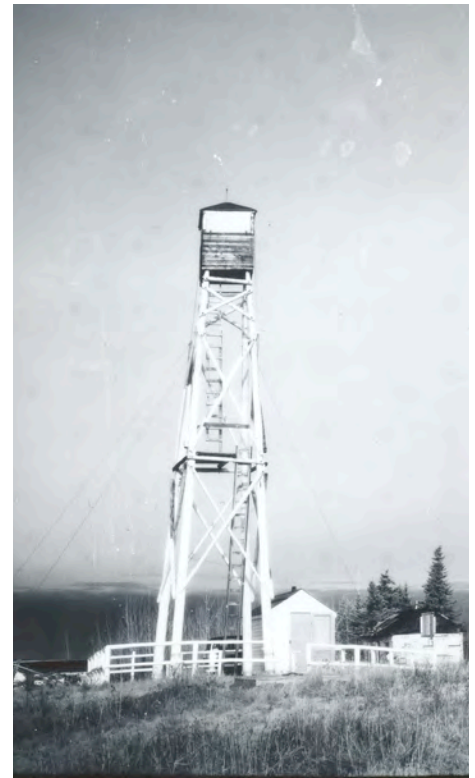
# Holden (continued)

can discuss what are otherwise little known canoe routes that will undoubtedly excite the holiday “voyageur” in future.

Hand in hand with Jack’s assurance on the trail came a mutual trust between his office and his Indian co-workers. He conducted his official affairs with all of the impartiality he could muster. He listened and learned, he trusted and was in turn trusted, his counsel, when requested, must have been sagacious and objective yet, in his own words, “he tried to remain aloof from personal feuds”. Jack’s personal philosophy is typical of the true woodsman: relaxed, broad and receptive to the inevitable; acknowledging persistence

in attainment and the whimsical rationality of all forms of human behaviour. He attacked his duties with vigor and determination but met adversity with good humor and he knew just when to resign. He scrapped with anyone who threatened a pledge he might have made to his associations. As a result, throughout his district he claimed almost universal trust. Men followed him willingly and, when the need arose, obeyed his firefighting instructions to the letter and without question.

In 1964 Jack retired staying on in his own small cabin he owned in Wabiskaw. As he pointed out, “after 22 years, where would I go?”



Wabasca Crawl Tower mid 1960s



Wabasca Ranger Station mid 1960s



Lower left are the old forestry building and Holden’s residence. Above them, within the fenced area, are new forestry office and house compound. The wooden Wabasca crawl tower is on the hill at right.

## FHAA launches new website

The Forest History Association of Alberta recently launched a newly designed website. The new site contains a treasure trove of information, including historic documents, meeting minutes, newsletters, photos and the Association’s governance documents. Discover Alberta’s forest history at <http://albertaforesthistory.ca>.



February 10, 2010

- home
- about us
- governance
- historic documents
- meetings
- newsletters
- photos
- membership


### Discover Forestry

Alberta's forested landscapes began to recover about 10,000 years ago following retreat of the glaciers.

Today's forests are the product of thousands of years of change. The climate has warmed and cooled and is believed to be warming again. Patterns of rainfall have varied, and disturbances such as fire have both created diversity within the forest and influenced the boundary between forest and prairie.

The many historical aspects of the forest itself are intriguing from a human perspective.

People followed close behind the recovery of Alberta's forest. To them, the forested landscapes would have been important for the production of fuel, shelter and associated plants and animals. Aboriginal people, as recently as the early 20th century, used fire to create and maintain conditions that supported wildlife and food crops such as berries, adding to the diversity of the forest.



# Mark your calendar



March 17, 2010

## 6th Annual Forest History Association of Alberta Annual General Meeting

Location: Coast Plaza Edmonton (10155-105 Street); contact Bruce Mayer at [Bruce.Mayer@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Bruce.Mayer@gov.ab.ca) for further information



September 27-29, 2010

## CIF-IFC Annual General Meeting & Conference

Location: Jasper; contact [admin@cif-ifc.org](mailto:admin@cif-ifc.org) for further information

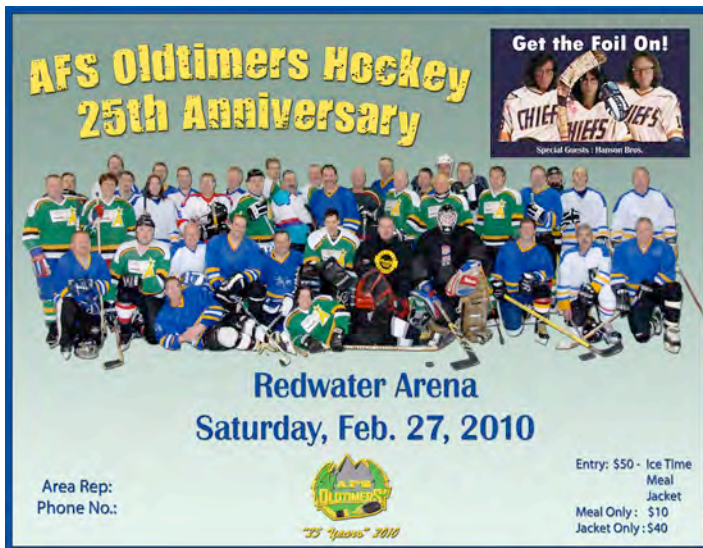
Join the Canadian Institute of Forestry for their conference on "Regional Land Use Planning in a Global Economy". Timing and location of this conference are significant with the 200th anniversary of David Thompson and his exploration for a route across the Rockies; similar to the new challenges facing us today on land use planning.

October 2, 2010

## 50th Anniversary Hinton Training Centre

Location: Hinton Training Centre; contact Crystal Miller at [Crystal.Miller@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Crystal.Miller@gov.ab.ca) for further information

The Hinton Training Centre, previously known as the Forestry Training School, Forest Technology School and Environmental Training Centre, is celebrating its 50th anniversary in Hinton. An open house is being planned for Saturday October 2, 2010 showcasing recent renovations to the facility, live demonstrations of simulators and rappelling, and a theme based display in the John C. Wagar Gymnasium. The theme will be "HTC through the decades", starting in the 1950s working right up to 2010. To celebrate this event, the Hinton Training Centre plans on pre-selling 50th anniversary brass belt buckles and t-shirts. The training centre is looking to receive photographs or stories of people or events that you feel should be included in the timeline, or even recorded for future history. For further information contact Crystal Miller at (780) 865-8318 or [Crystal.Miller@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Crystal.Miller@gov.ab.ca).



February 27, 2010

## 25th Anniversary of AFS Oldtimer Hockey ... the Tradition Continues

Location: Redwater Arena; contact Rod Houle at [Rod.Houle@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Rod.Houle@gov.ab.ca) for further information



March 6 and 7, 2010

## 34th Annual E.S. Huestis Forestry Curling Bonspiel

Location: Athabasca Multiplex; contact Greg Boyachuk at [Greg.Boyachuk@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Greg.Boyachuk@gov.ab.ca) for further information

**THE 34TH ANNUAL E.S. HUESTIS FORESTRY CURLING BONSPIEL**  
**WHAT:** A SEMI-COMPETITIVE, FUN, SOCIAL EVENT  
**WHEN:** MARCH 6-7, 2010  
**WHERE:** THE ATHABASCA MULTIPLEX  
**WHO:** ANY CURRENT, FORMER OR RETIRED SRD/PARKS STAFF (AT LEAST 2 PER TEAM) AND FAMILY/FRIENDS  
 ANY COMBINATION OF MALE/FEMALE PLAYERS  
**COST:** \$160.00 PER TEAM  
**INFO:** PLEASE E-MAIL GREG BOYACHUK ([Greg.Boyachuk@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Greg.Boyachuk@gov.ab.ca)) BY FEBRUARY 1, IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ENTERING A TEAM



- GUARANTEED 3 GAMES
- CATERED SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER
- SPONSORED SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST
- CHARITY CASINO AND AUCTION FOR THE CANADIAN FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION
- DRAW TO THE BUTTON CONTEST
- 50/50 DRAW
- EXCELLENT PRIZES



# Obituaries

**Dennis Dube** was born June 30, 1941 and passed away June 3, 2009 in Edmonton. Dennis had a long and rewarding career with the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) and made many important contributions to forest fire research in Canada and internationally. Dennis received his B.Sc. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Montana in 1966 and his M.Sc. in Plant Ecology from the University of Alberta in 1976. Dennis began his career with CFS in 1971 and became a full-time employee in 1973 working out of the Northern Forestry Centre (NoFC) in Edmonton, Alberta. Focusing on fire ecology he sought to enhance our understanding of fire's role in forest ecosystems and was a strong advocate for the use of prescribed fire in maintaining healthy and productive forests. From 1980 to 1984 he was the NoFC Fire Project Leader where he built strong relationships with provincial and territorial fire management agencies in Canada and played an active role in the Intermountain/Interior West Fire Council. After a one year hiatus as Forester for the City of Winnipeg he moved to Ottawa and became the CFS's Forest Fire Scientific Coordinator where he became more actively involved in international fire research and management activities. In 1991 Dennis returned to his Alberta roots and became the Director of the Forest Resources Program at NoFC (which included the fire research project) and remained in that position until late 1998 when he was diagnosed with a brain tumour. An amazing attitude, tenacity, and determination guided his journey over the past 10+ years as he dealt with the tumour with courage and grace. Dennis touched many lives and will be remembered for his passion and concern for our environment, love of people, enthusiasm for sports, reading, movies, and pursuing life.

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**Zoltan Licsko** was born July 21, 1927 in Hungary and passed away August 10, 2009 in Whitecourt at 82 years. Zoltan began work in the Forest Surveys Branch of the Alberta Forest Service in 1958 first as a compiler and later a photogrammetrist and technical assistant. In 1967 Zoltan became the forester in Whitecourt Forest, focussing his next 15 years on reforestation activities. He was instrumental introducing new and progressive practices in forest management in such areas as tree planting, stand conversion from deciduous to coniferous, thinning and most notably the use of heavy equipment for site preparation, specifically his use of the Martini plow in the Meekwap Lake area.

**Les (Lefty) Pliska** passed away December 16, 2009 at the age of 83 years in Edson. Lefty started working for the Alberta Forest Service in Edson in 1961 first as a towerman prior to settling into the warehouseman position until his retirement in 1987.

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**Peter Nortcliffe** was born February 20, 1929 in Harrogate, Yorkshire, England and passed away December 21, 2009 at the age of 80 years. Peter worked for the Alberta Forest Service from 1964 to 1993, starting in the far north, later spending much of his career in the Crowsnest Pass until retirement. Peter was the last Forest Officer to be stationed at the remote Embarras Ranger Station, located along the Athabasca River south of Lake Athabasca.

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**Erling Winquist** was born March 9, 1933 at Vasa Park, Pidgeon Lake, and passed away in Fort Saskatchewan January 2, 2010. Erling was a photogrammetrist with the Alberta Forest Service from 1953 until his retirement in 1988, 35 years. Erling was witness to, and involved in many of the new forest management inventories identified and used over the years, from the first aerial photograph inventories conducted in the 1950s establishing the Phase I inventory to work on Phase II and Phase III inventories. The Alberta Vegetative Inventory (AVI) was becoming the new tool when Erling retired. Erling organized and coordinated the yearly E.S. Huestis Curling Bonspiel from its inception in 1966 to 1988.

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**Joe Machovec** was born October 2, 1931 and passed away January 17, 2010 at the age of 78 years. Joe worked for the Alberta Forest Service as a Forest Ranger/Officer in the Sheep River district from 1957 until his retirement in 1977. He will be remembered as a passionate man of the environment.

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**Arden Rytz** was born March 10, 1922 and passed away January 28, 2010 at the age of 87 years. Further information on Arden is provided in this newsletter.

# A touch of the past...

**The following is from a letter written by Forest Supervisor A.C. St. Clair (Department of the Interior, Forestry Branch, Rocky Mountains Forest Reserve, Office of Bow River Forest) to Forest Ranger William Foran (Lineham, Alberta) on October 10, 1917 with regards to construction/improvements to be made on the Bighorn Water Supply:**

"Sir: I am sending you to-day eight (8) men, hired through Barris and Company Employment Agents, for work on the Bighorn Water Supply. These men are hired at 45¢ per hour, subject to a deduction of 30¢ per meal. You, of course, realize that we are paying these men pretty high wages and therefore the work should be carried through as rapidly as possible, and if you find any of them are not efficient workmen, of course, you will let them go."

*Ensuring cost effective operations still exist today!*

**Robert Guest, towerman and renowned artist, provided a number of sketches and prints for use as art work in the Department of Lands and Forests Land Forest Wildlife magazines published from the 1950s to 1970s. The story line on the back of the Spring 1965 edition said:**

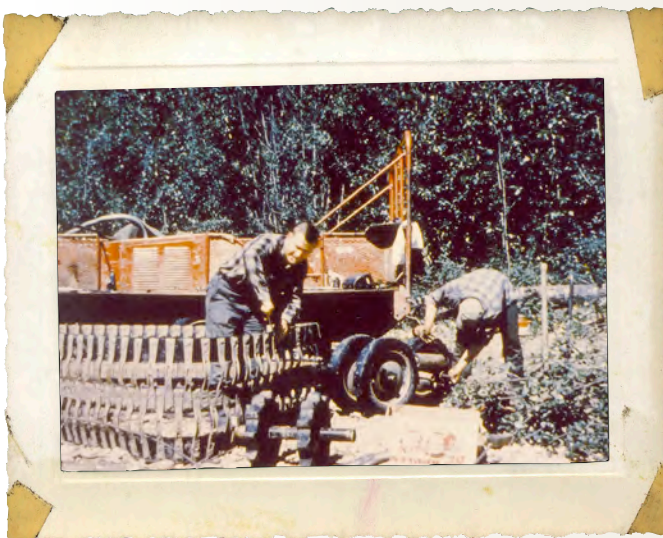
"A graduate of the Alberta Institute of Technology and Banff School of Fine Arts, 27-year-old Bob has already created a number of excellent sketches and canvasses. All deal with the outdoor world and they illustrate his deep affection for nature. We expect to hear a great deal more about this young man's talent in future. (Underline provided by the Trails and Tales editor.) He applies skill, enthusiasm and diligence to an extraordinary degree."

*For those who remember the June 2009 Trails and Tales newsletter, two of Bob's original paintings were donated to the Forest History Association in 2008. Bob recently donated a third painting to the FHAA in the fall of 2009.*

**What is the origin of the word Ranger? (From the Illustrated Canadian Forestry Magazine, May, 1921)**

Ranger is derived from the old French word, "renc", meaning row or rank. It was the official title of the keepers of the royal parks. The Rolls of Parliament for 1455 listed "Foresters and Rangers of Oure For-estes".

## FHAA PHOTO CORNER



Doug Lyons and Fermen L'Hirondelle repairing a track on M8 Bombi, Slave Lake Forest timber cruise, 1959



Doug Lyons and Gordon DeGrace of the Alberta Forest Service Timber Management Branch conducting a quota draw, mid 1960s





*Sign from the Embarras Ranger Station, 1960s*



*Retired from the Alberta Forest Service, Oliver Glanfield (R) spends his time as curator of the Fort Chipewyan Bicentennial Museum. John McLevin (L) is the Forestry Manager in Fort McMurray.*



*Rock cairn on mountain top south west of Nordegg. Location used as reference starting point for Mountain Legacy Project crew taking repeat photographs of the area*



*Butch Shenfield looking for camera station reference points with the Mountain Legacy Project crew in September 2009. Upper Saskatchewan prescribed burn in the background*





Alberta Forest Service Ranger meeting, Northern Alberta Forest District, Grande Prairie, 1941 (photo Dennis Pegg collection) Back Row (L to R): Vic Mitchell (Chief Ranger at large), Louis N. (Doonie) Donovan (Radio Operator, Grande Prairie), Bert Speers (Spirit River), D.B. Harrington (Sturgeon Heights), Harry Hembold (Peace River), Pete Comeau (Grande Prairie), Hugh MacDonald (Superintendent, Grande Prairie), Art Sherman (Halcourt). Front Row (L to R): Not Identified, W.V. (Bill) Morison (Worsley), Frank L. Cavette (Debolt), Wm. Mason Wood (Blueberry Mountain), Sherman G. (Trix) Willis (Sexsmith)

(Right) Aerial view of Pelican Spruce Mills, Upper Wells, north of Wandering River, August 1973



Alberta Forest Service Radio Branch staff, April 1946 (photo credit Sam Fomuk)  
L to R: Don Bruce, Hugh Short, Charlie Curran, Bob Poirier, Ronnie Linsdell, Gordon Fowlie, Al Schultz, Jack Dempsey

## TRAILS & TALES

Published by the Forest History Association of Alberta

Current membership: 55

Layout by Rob Harris

**Please send story ideas to  
Bruce Mayer at (780) 644-4656**

FOREST HISTORY ASSOCIATION  
OF ALBERTA