

TRAILS & TALES

Newsletter of the Forest History Association of Alberta

Seventh annual general meeting - impressive gathering

A record 66 FHAA members attend the 2011 AGM

On March 16, 2011 the Forest History Association of Alberta celebrated its 7th annual general meeting with 66 members in attendance, the largest ever.



Ken Armson and presentation on the Forest History Society of Ontario

President Peter Murphy opened the meeting welcoming our two guest speakers, Robin Huth, retired Alberta Forest Service ranger and Ken Armson, President of the Forest History Society of Ontario. Peter talked

about the good things happening with forest history in Alberta, but stressed that the FHAA was part of a bigger picture. The Network in Canadian History & Environment (NiCHE) established a sub-committee focussed primarily on forest history, and has combined forces with the Forest History Society in Durham, North Carolina, to catalogue forest history resources in Canada and to provide recommendations on how associations and institutes might collaborate further.

FHAA executive members are working with NiCHE representatives. The Canadian Forest Service, through the leadership of Jim Farrell, recognized forest history as a legitimate research activity and arranged for grants to

be awarded to the Forestry Chronicle and the four active provincial history associations. The FHAA will be working on its website, oral interviews and digital cataloguing as part of funding received. Peter also mentioned the British Columbia Forest Service is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2012.

Bruce Mayer provided an overview of the previous year's activities from the Trails & Tales newsletters to further work completed on the website. He also reviewed with members the recently completed financial statements.

Elections were held for three executive positions. Bob Udell was acclaimed for a three year term as the industry member; Peter Murphy was acclaimed for a three year term as the public member; and Bruce Mayer was acclaimed for a three year term as the government member. Door prizes were presented to Tom Archibald, Norm Denney and Don Fregren.



Membership at the 7th Annual AGM March 16, 2011



L to R: Teresa Stokes, Darren Tapp and Gary Davis



L to R: Mel Meunier and Jim Lelacheur



L to R: Bob Morton and Dick Dempster



L to R: Dave Smith and Mike Putzke



L to R: Peter Murphy and Robin Huth



L to R: John McLevin and Bill Bereska

Guest speaker Robin Huth led the audience through an entertaining look at what it meant to be a forest ranger in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Robin's postings were at Coalspur, Lynx Creek and Jumping Pound Ranger Stations. A forest rangers work consisted of installing, maintaining and repairing phone lines, managing the forest reserves for cattle grazing operations, enforcing game regulations and approving and enforcing timber harvest and sawmill operations. Rangers also spent much of their summer on horseback patrolling their district for forest fires, and then suppressing the fires. Robin's stories also addressed the challenges faced by rangers' wives raising babies and young children in isolated locations, compounded when the ranger was away for long periods of time at courses or riding through the district.

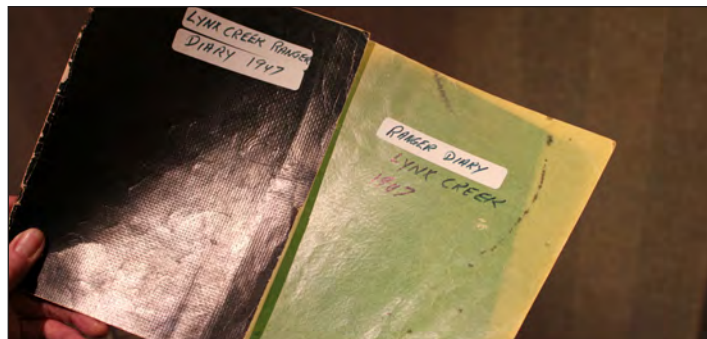
Ken Armson provided FHAA members an overview on the start-up and accomplishments to date of the Forest History Society of Ontario. The FHSO had its first founding meeting in February 2010.



L to R: Keith McClain, Bob Udell, Ken Armson and Bob Fessenden



L to R: Dave Morgan, Steve Ferdinand and Greg Branton



Robin Huth's ranger diaries, Lynx Creek Ranger Station, 1947



L to R: Rick Blackwood, Morgan Kehr and Rob Anderson



L to R: Roger Loberg and Norm Denney



L to R: Ken Armson and Robin Huth



Further information available at:
<http://www.un.org/en/events/iyof2011/>



Further information available at:
<http://www.bcfs100.ca/bcscrips/index.asp>

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

FOREST HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

Sign up today to be part of Alberta's only Association dedicated to preserving 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

For more info contact Bruce Mayer

Ph: (780) 644-4656

E-mail: bruce.mayer@gov.ab.ca

Bob Stevenson – FHAA Director



Bob was born in Calgary, Alberta on July 29, 1937 and attended school there through to his grade 12 graduation. In 1956, Bob enrolled at the University of Idaho graduating in 1960 with a degree in Forestry and a Forest Entomology major. During the summers Bob worked for the United States Forest Service and in British Columbia on entomology and forest health related projects. Upon graduation Bob was hired by the Canadian Forest Service (CFS), Dominion Forestry Branch at their Calgary lab. In 1962 he took educational leave and enrolled in a Masters of Science at the University of Idaho to study the impact of the Engelmann Spruce Weevil on spruce regeneration. Bob worked as a Forestry Officer with the CFS for 20 years on forest health and insect and disease research projects, post burn and forest regeneration assessments throughout north western Canada. In 1970 the Calgary lab moved to the new Northern CFS location in Edmonton. Bob and his wife Erla moved to an acreage and woodlot east of Sherwood Park where they have resided for 41 years.

In 1980 Bob was hired by the Alberta government as the Director of the Information and Extension Branch, Fish and Wildlife Division, retiring in 1992. This position involved a variety of publications e.g. the yearly hunting and fishing regulations, a job that was done manually by typewriter and painstakingly proof read and edited to ensure that all documents were correct and delivered on time. Bob and his team finalized the widely acclaimed Hunter Education Manual and a sequel on fishing. He was active with Canadian Institute of Forestry presentations at many public hearings: e.g. the 1984 Eastern Slopes Policy, herbicide spraying and reforestation issues. In 1982, Bob worked to establish the Order of the Bighorn Award, a prestigious award that recognizes outstanding contributions to fish and wildlife conservation by individuals, organizations and corporations.

Since his retirement Bob has been active in recording the history of Alberta's natural resources including the people that make it happen. In recent years, he has contributed to two centennial books; *Fish, Fur and Feathers: Fish and Wildlife Conservation in Alberta, 1905-2005*; and *Alberta Forest Service 1930-2005, Protection and management of Alberta's Forests*. Other prominent publications involving Bob include: *A Hard Road to Travel, The Lands, Forests and People of the Upper Athabasca Valley; The Resilient Forest, Looking Beyond the Stumps and Mountain Trails, Memoirs of an Alberta Forest Ranger 1920-1945, the Jack Glen story*. Bob continues to follow issues influencing Alberta's natural resources and offers valuable reference and photograph support to people interested in the province's fish and wildlife and forestry history. In 2005 he received the Alberta Centennial Award for his contributions.



Bob and his wife Erla were married on June 30, 1962 and have four children, two boys and twin girls. Three of their four children and families live nearby, the fourth lives with his family in Salt Lake City, Utah. Bob and Erla have 10 grandchildren. Numerous family activities keep them busy along with gardening, trail riding, cross country skiing and raising some

livestock and poultry. Both are longstanding volunteer directors at the nearby Cooking Lake/Blackfoot Grazing and Provincial Recreation Area – the site of Alberta's first forest reserve, 1899.

1919 Fires and Lac La Biche

by Peter Murphy

There were two major fire events in 1919 – a major spring burn in the northeast part of Alberta, and summer fires on the eastern slopes. The Village of Lac La Biche burned on May 19, 1919, destroying all but three buildings: the railway station, church and railway tycoon J.D. McArthur's Hotel. The Hotel served as a post-fire nursing station. Since the telegraph lines also burned, word could not be sent to Edmonton until the next day when a locomotive made it across the burn enabling the Conductor to make a call. The province and Red Cross quickly responded with a relief train from Edmonton. This seems to have been the first recorded wildland-urban interface fire in Alberta. The smoke was so thick that residents thought there was an eclipse of the sun. Children were loaded into wagons and left in the shallows of the lake to keep them safe. The annual report of the Canada Department of the Interior for the year 1919 referred briefly to a large fire in the Battleford fire ranging district in Saskatchewan that burned over 2,740,000 acres (1.1 million hectares). However, there were actually several fires during the last two weeks in May, many of which burned together. Various reports suggest that they burned



Photo courtesy of Tom Macaggno, Lac La Biche

within an estimated area extending 450 kilometres west to east from near Boyle, Alberta to north of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, and up to 150 kilometres at its widest point. The area within this roughly determined perimeter is 3.1 million hectares; actual area burned may well have been around 2 million hectares. The fire burned out McArthur's logging camp south of Lac La Biche and the extensive stands of spruce east across the border into Saskatchewan. There were many close calls among settlers, and many stories about saving their homes by putting children on the

roofs with wet sacks to put out falling embers while the parents cleared lines from which to backfire. A band of 23 Cree camped at Big Island Lake were overrun. Despite taking refuge in the lake, twelve died and of the eleven survivors many were badly scarred. Two Cree hunters also died on Wolf Mountain.

On the eastern slopes the 1919 fires were reported in the Crowsnest Forest, the larger ones in the Porcupine Hills and Racehorse Creek. There are also references to two big ones in the Bow River, Clearwater and Brazeau Forests.

Northern is 40!

On Thursday June 21, 2011 Natural Resources Canada, the Canadian Forest Service celebrated "40 Years of Innovation in Forestry" at the Northern Forestry Centre. Events for the 40th anniversary included planting a ceremonial tree, burying a time capsule, touring the building, visiting with old friends and a group picture. Research into wildfire, silviculture, insect and disease, forest economics

and social matters are but a few of the topic areas focussed on at the Northern Forestry Centre in its first 40 years; looking forward to the next 40.

Tom Rosser, Assistant Deputy Minister and Tim Sheldan, Director General with the ceremonial tree (right). They are actually asking themselves how long it will take to shovel a hole to fit the bole of that tree!



Forestry Round-up Poem

by Harry Edgecombe

Forest Rangers were required to own at least two horses – a saddle horse and pack horse. Since most of the travel and work was done by horse, rangers were always on the lookout for more good animals. One source was to catch horses running wild. Harry Edgecombe, ranger at the Meadows, wrote this poem about what turned out to be the last big forestry horse roundup. It was held in the Clearwater Forest around 1949.

The Forestry had a round-up
Upon the River Tay,
The riders brought the camp outfit,
and Walker hauled the hay.

There was Morris from the Red Deer
With his palomino steed
Noted for its endurance
And ever lasting speed.

Jack Walker rode old Nellie
The mare that like to bolt.
He said he could not ride her
Unless the horn he had aholt.

Ronnie rode in on Tony,
They made a rugged pair.
He said he would bend those horses
And never turn a hair.

Dick came in on Corbit,
A prancing little dun.
He said he would catch a stallion
Before the day was done.

Jack and Dick from the Big Horn,
Came in with horses four.
They said if these were not enough,
They would go back home for more.

The Brazeau sent Ben,
Who travelled all the way.
To catch those wildies
Or help, was what he had to say.

From the Meadows came Harry.
His horse was known as Dan.
The meanest little horse
That ever carried a man.

The wheel of riders gradually grew
Until we were short one cog.
Then Bill Winters from Moose Creek
Came in on Spotted Dog.

For days we chased those wildies,
Through crusts of drifted snow,
We trailed them through the mountains,
Or where ever they did go.

After five long days of riding,
Only seventeen head were caught.
So the forestry sent out Bloomberg
Who claimed to know a lot.

Next morning just at daylight
Jack Browning called the crew
We saddled up and headed west.
By ten o'clock Bloomberg was through.

For seven more days the chase went on.
Each day a band was caught,
Until thirty five head were corralled
On Bob Bugbee's feeding lot.

Now this is the story of the last round up.
The forestry said it did not pay.
So ask Superintendent Hall
And see what he will say.

Names of the people mentioned are listed
in order of appearance:
Morris Verhaeghe – Ranger;
Jack Walker – Ranger;
Ronnie Lyle – Ranger;
Dick Knorr – Ranger;
Jack and Dick Browning – Guides and Outfitters;
Ben Shantz – Ranger;
Harry Edgecombe – Ranger;
Bill Winters – Trapper;
Bill Bloomberg – Forester at Rocky;
Jack Browning – Guide and Outfitter;
Bob Bugbee – Guide and Outfitter;
Herb Hall – Forest Superintendent at Rocky

Route of the Columbia Express – Friends of Athabasca Pass

by Peter Murphy

David Thompson trudged over Athabasca Pass 200 years ago, mapping the overland route to the Pacific that would become the first 'Trans-Canada' road – to be the route of the "Columbia Express". It was developed by the North West Company and refined by the Hudson's Bay Company to carry mail and passengers for their Forts along the way between Lachine and York Factory on Hudson Bay, and Fort Vancouver near the mouth of the Columbia River. In July 2011 Canada recognized the Columbia Express as a national historic event.

The 140 kilometre portage over Athabasca Pass from Jasper House to Boat Encampment was the longest and most difficult along the almost 4,000 kilometre route. Parts of the original trail are still evident within Jasper National Park.

Jasper-Hinton historian and FHAA member Tom Peterson organized a two-day event for "Friends of Athabasca Pass". Over 40 'friends' gathered at Pine Bungalows in Jasper on the evening of August 18, 2011 to listen to Tom describe the routes used to access the pass and a history of its travelers. Tom, with FHAA President Peter Murphy, led a



Friends of Athabasca Pass gather at the Moab Lake trail head, August 19, 2011

tour to visit and walk on several of the accessible trail sites; followed by after-dinner video about Thompson's journey, talks by those who had crossed the Pass, and a presentation by Murphy about tie logging on the Whirlpool River and a survey record of part of the old trail. The session was part of a series of events in the Jasper-Hinton area during this bi-centennial of Thompson's journey.

Athabasca River Voyageur Canoe Brigade – Route of the Columbia Express

by Bob Udell

Between August 18 and 21, 2011 about 150 paddlers and volunteers participated in the Athabasca River Voyageur Canoe Brigade - one of a series of celebrations associated with the January 1811 "discovery" of the Athabasca Pass by North America's greatest mapmaker, David Thompson. This route up and over the Athabasca Pass to the Columbia River was pivotal for the North West Company, and later Hudson's Bay Company express brigades carrying mail and passengers between Hudson Bay and the mouth of the Columbia River for the next 40+ years – the Columbia Express.

Participants paddled in shifts in 25-foot canoes along the route from the mouth of the Maligne River in Jasper National Park to West Fraser's Emerson Creek Road bridge over the Athabasca River, 60 kilometres east of Hinton. The journey was interspersed with a number of stops with activities and presentations to share the historic event with communities along the way. Participants came



Athabasca River Voyageur Canoe Brigade starting out at Brule Lake, August 2011

from as far away as Germany and included the 7th and 8th generation direct descendants of David Thompson - Laverne and Benjamin Thompson. A number of people from Alberta's forestry community including FHAA board member Bob Udell and his wife Joan and her family took part in the Brigade.

Retirements

RICK STEWART



Clearwater Area staff held a retirement function for Rick on March 25, 2011; his last day was February 28, 2011. Rick retired after nearly 40 years in forestry, both forest industry and government. First interested in forestry at age 12, Rick became a Junior Forest Ranger in Blairmore after graduating high school. He worked for The Pas Lumber Company, North West Pulp & Power and Cardinal River Coal before becoming a permanent Forest Officer in 1973 at Keg River. Other locations included the Highwood, Turner Valley, South Wapiti, Grande Prairie, Fort Vermilion, Beaver Lake, Calling Lake, Alder Flats, Drayton Valley and Rocky Mountain House. Rick was instrumental in championing the Alberta Forest Technologists Association (AFTA), becoming its first chairman in 1991. AFTA later became the College of Alberta Professional Forest Technologists where Rick continued to work over the years in many capacities.

ROB MANWARING

On March 31, 2011 Rob retired after nearly 39 years with the Alberta Forest Service, now Sustainable Resource Development. Rob started his forestry career as a lookout observer on Moose Mountain Lookout in August 1972, and then in April 1973 as a labourer and small crew foreman in the Elbow District, Bow Crow Forest. Rob and Cathy married on June 29, 1974 and lived in Grimshaw where Rob was working as an apprentice carpenter. Shortly after that the Manwaring's moved to High Level in the Footner Lake Forest, where Rob apprenticed under Bill Pederson. Rob received his journeyman certificate on February 27, 1978 and was then promoted to Carpenter June 1, 1978. The Manwaring's moved to Grimshaw when Rob was promoted to Carpenter II in July 15, 1982, Peace River Forest. He was then reclassified to Construction Inspector 1 on December 1, 1996 and Construction Inspector 2 on May 1, 2002, in charge of the provincial forest protection facility program. Rob was reclassified to Facilities Manager on July 1, 2005. Rob and Cathy have three daughters, Teresa, Tara Lee and Tania, and 7 grandchildren.



LOWELL LYSENG

On June 17, 2011 Lowell retired after nearly 38 years of inventory and mapping. On September 18, 1973, Lowell walked through the doors of the Natural Resources Building (now the Bowker Building on 109th Street) to start his career as a Drafting Technologist for the Timber Management Branch, Alberta Forest Service, Department of Lands and Forests. His supervisor was Erling Winquist and he worked alongside four other technologists; Pat Kenney, John Vandenbrink, Wally Rachel and Reg Schultz. Fred McDougall was the head of the Timber Management Branch, Charlie Jackson was in



charge of the Planning Section and Cliff Henderson was in charge of the Woods Operations Section. In the early years Lowell was a drafter of quota licences, extracted and compiled timber volumes and was a photo interpreter. In 1977 Lowell took a new job as Technologist III in the Resource Evaluation and Planning Branch working on the new Phase 3 inventory. In 1978 Lowell moved to Grande Prairie in a newly created Mapping Technologist position, working for Chief Forester Craig Quintilio. There Lowell also participated in land use, scaling, regeneration surveys, aerial seeding, campground and trail design and construction, and field checking the Phase 3 forest inventory. Many weeks were also spent on fire export in the early 1980s. In 1988 Lowell moved back to Edmonton as a Technologist III in the Resource Analysis Section following Erling Winquist's retirement. He was later reclassified to

Technologist IV in 1990 and Technologist V in 2004. As FMA holders took over more responsibility with the incoming AVI inventory, Lowell's roles and responsibilities changed. The focus was now on Crown Forest Management Units, AVI auditing, updating and reconciliation of spatial cutblock boundaries, wildfire mapping and the development of new inventory specifications and procedures. Lowell is also well known around the Huestis curling bonspiel community for his many years organizing, and the number of times his name is on the trophy.

BRUCE DANKIK

On Friday June 17, 2011 friends and family gathered to celebrate the many contributions Bruce Dankik made at the University of Alberta and the Devonian Botanic Garden over his 38 year career. Bruce graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Science in Forestry in 1965; a Masters in Forestry in forest genetics and ecology in 1967, and a PhD in 1972. His career began in 1965 as a teaching assistant evolving to instructor in Michigan before becoming an Instructor, Assistant Professor and Chairman in the Biology Department at Saginaw Valley College. In 1973 Bruce took an Assistant Professor role at the University of Alberta. In 1977 he became Associate Professor and then in 1984 a Professor, all in the Department of Forest Science. Since 1994 Bruce has been a Professor in the Department of Renewable Resources at the University of Alberta. During his tenure as professor Bruce was the Chair of the Department of Forest Science from 1989 to 1994, and Chair of the Department of Renewable Resources from 1994 to 1995. He then took on the role of associate Vice-President (Academic) from 1995 to 2000. On September 1, 2001, Bruce became the Director of the Devonian Botanic Garden.



Throughout his years at the University of Alberta, Bruce has also been the Editor, Canadian Journal of Forest Research; Assistant Editor-in-Chief, NRCC Research Journals; Editor-in-Chief, NRCC Research Press and Editor-in-Chief, Canadian Science Publishing. Bruce has chaired or been a member on many advisory committees including the Panel on the Environmental Effects of Forestry Operations in Alberta, Expert Panel on Forest Management, the Alberta Environmental Protection Advisory Committee and the Canadian Forestry Accreditation Board. He worked with colleagues on the 1984 and 1986 Alberta Trees of Renown publications through the Alberta Forestry Association. Bruce is an avid book collector and has been fly-fishing and tying flies since he was 12 years old. Retirement will include fishing his favourite waters along the foothills in southern Alberta and adjacent British Columbia, along the foothills of the Andes in northern Patagonia in Argentina, on the South Island of New Zealand, and the Yellowstone National Park area.

DIANNE L'HEUREUX

On June 30, 2011, Lac La Biche staff held a farewell for Dianne celebrating over 30 years with the Alberta government; 25 of them with Sustainable Resource Development. Dianne worked as a fire costing clerk, timber management clerk, information coordinator and wildfire prevention clerk. Those that spoke of Dianne at her farewell, all spoke of her dedication to her work and to the number of forest officers, superintendents and managers she had coached and trained over the years. Dianne is looking forward to 'summers off', working with her husband George on their farm.



JOHN SPENCE

On June 30, 2011 John completed his term as Chair, University of Alberta, Faculty of Agricultural, Environmental and Life Sciences, Department of Renewable Resources after two full five-year terms. The Department credits John for the multitude of initiatives he directed, including the appointment of 16 new academic staff, the creation of the Alberta School of Forest Science and Management, ongoing program accreditation reviews, and international partnerships (e.g. Mexico and China), while at the same time maintaining a strong research program at EMEND and contributing to undergraduate and graduate teaching. John was also a driving force behind the Wildland Partnership for Wildland Fire Science, a partnership between the University of Alberta, the Canadian Forest Service and Sustainable Resource Development. John is not in full retirement mode and will continue to teach entomology, ecology, conservation and evolutionary biology at the University. Dr. Vic Lieffers took over as Chair on July 1, 2011.



PAT WEARMOUTH

In July 2011 Pat retired after a 42 year forestry career, the last 30 years with Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd. at their Grande Prairie operation. After graduating the NAIT Forest Technology program in 1970 Pat moved to Prince George, B.C., and worked as a timber cruiser for a consulting company. Two years later Pat married his wife Barbara and they spent better part of a year traveling through Europe. Upon his return Pat enrolled in the University of Alberta forestry program, graduating in 1975. Work in the summer months was with the Alberta Forest Service in Slave Lake and Grande Prairie, either timber cruising or supervising tree planters. After graduation Pat worked as a project forester for the AFS in Grande Prairie. In 1976 Pat moved to Saskatchewan to start up a reforestation program for the Simpson Timber Company in Hudson Bay. Large scale planting projects were becoming the norm, utilizing the piece rate contractors as we do today. Says Pat, "this was the time when contract planting processes and seedling stock types were being worked out and there were lots of opinions and options to sort through". In 1981, Pat and family moved back to Grande Prairie, with a new



role at Proctor and Gamble. Over the next 30 years Pat enjoyed a variety of roles including harvest/haul, forest planning and of course silviculture, which has been his focus over the long run. In Grande Prairie he was given the opportunity to interact with a variety of people and organizations involved in forestry; and recalls that “there was a lot of excitement in the industry and a fair amount of controversy during some of those years. The move from what had been termed ‘administrative’ forestry to a more ecological and social based forestry was occurring as well, and continues to evolve”. For Pat, memories include being involved in planting around 200 million trees, and working with groups to develop policies, plans and procedures used to guide forestry development and practices. Pat has a

number of hobbies he plans to continue with in retirement; including Director in the Peace Country Chapter of the Alberta Historical Society, playing stand-up bass, singing coral music, reading, travel, volunteering and generally observing the world.

TED WELLS

Ted spent his last day as Warehouseman in Grande Prairie on July 15, 2011 with friends and colleagues. He officially retires on November 2, 2011 after a 26 year career with forestry. Ted moved to Alberta in 1975 and started work at the North American Stud Mill in Mitsue running a loader. He later operated a grader with Alberta Transportation in the Kinuso area before buying a farm in 1979. There he farmed and operated a grader for an oilfield company in the Shell House Mountain oilfield. From 1985 to 1989 Ted worked in the Kinuso Ranger Station as warehouseman, and as a carpenter and warehouseman in Slave Lake before getting a permanent warehouseman job in 1989. In April 1998, Ted became the warehouseman in Grande Prairie. He was regularly exported on wildfires in supply and service functions, the last few years as a Level 1 Logistics Service Chief. Ted spent two weeks prior to retirement on the Utikuma Lake complex at Red Earth. Ted and his wife Jo Ann sold their farm north of Clairmont and moved to Nova Scotia to retire.



DUANE POLLOCK

Duane spent 25 years as a warehouseman for the Alberta Forest Service, now Sustainable Resource Development, officially retiring September 15, 2011. Duane first received a telecommunications diploma at NAIT before following his wife to Wabasca where she had a teaching contract. Chief Ranger Joe Smith hired Duane in 1986 when a seasonal warehousing job came open. Three years later Duane took a permanent warehousing job in Rocky Mountain House. In 1999 after several months of study he challenged the warehousing technician exam at NAIT earning a diploma. Duane began going out to fires in the late 1990's as



a Supply Officer and eventually as a Logistics Service Chief on Type 1 fires. He supported fire organizations across Alberta, Ontario, British Columbia, and the Yukon Territories, further sharing his knowledge and experiences in teaching situations at the Hinton Training Centre. After several structure and organizational changes in the department, Duane was responsible for integration of warehousing to the entire department in the Clearwater Area, reducing duplication and waste, reducing costs by sharing of equipment and resources, and patching up old tired facilities in a group of warehouse buildings. He pointed out that the warehousing facilities in Rocky Mountain House were built before Fidel Castro first visited Cuba. Duane sold his home in Rocky Mountain House and after his last day of work June 15, 2011, he moved his belongings to an island lot he and his wife purchased near Vancouver Island. Duane and his wife Bernice moved to Macau, China in August for Bernice's two year teaching contract. They expect to move back to British Columbia for final retirement after a little more travelling around the east Pacific.

JOHN MCLEVIN

On August 31, 2011 John retired after almost 40 years with Sustainable Resource Development. John started as a compassman at Footner Lake in 1971, graduating NAIT in 1972. In May 1972, John started as a Forest Officer I on wages in Kinuso, becoming permanent on July 1st. John was promoted to Forest Officer II in Slave Lake and in December 1978 became a Forest Officer III in the Slave Lake Headquarters. John moved his family to Manning as Forest Officer III in July 1980, transferring later to Fort Assiniboine as the Forest Officer III 2i/c in June 1982. In May 1986, John moved to the Lac La Biche Forest Headquarters as a Forest Protection Technician, then Timber Management Technician and later again as a Forest Protection Technician. In the mid 1990s, the forest service underwent administrative and geographic changes and John was then assigned to the new Lakeland Forest Area.

In August 2001 John moved to Edmonton to work in the Provincial Forest Fire Centre in the prevention and education section. In June 2005, John became a Wildland Fire Prevention Officer in the prevention and engineering section. In July 2007, John moved to Fort McMurray as the acting Forestry Manager, later becoming permanent in February 2009. John has been a strong proponent of FireSmart, through his leadership roles in Partners in Protection and work with local municipalities and the oil and gas industry.



DAVE MORGAN



On September 30, 2011 Dave retired with over 45 years working in forestry, the last 29 years with Sustainable Resource Development. While attending the University of British Columbia, Dave worked for the Alberta Forest Service during the summer of 1963 establishing permanent sample plots in west central Alberta. Dr. Jim Lee was the Party Chief and instrumental in designing the PSP system. The group consisted of Dr. Lee, a cook, and three crews of three, each headed by a forestry student. Joe Grigel (from the Crowsnest Pass – University of Montana), Bill Gilpin (from Edmonton – University of British Columbia) and Dave Morgan (from Lethbridge – University of British Columbia) were the crew leaders. Each crew had an International Travelall for transportation.

Dave graduated from the UBC with a BScF in 1965, starting work in June with Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Wood Buffalo National Park and Mackenzie Forest Service) at Fort Smith, NWT as Assistant Superintendent, Mackenzie Forest Service. In 1970, Dave transferred to Whitehorse, Yukon under DIAND (Yukon Forest Service) as Assistant Superintendent. Dave took leave from the Yukon Forest Service in the late 1970s to work on his master's degree program, but continued to work summer months in the Yukon. He completed his MScF from the University of Alberta in 1982. His thesis was on the use of large-scale aerial photography in forest inventories. In December 1982 Dave joined the Alberta Forest Service, Timber Management Branch, working for Ted Flanders and Director Don Fregren as the Head, Forest Measurement Section. In 1992, Dave became the head of the Biometrics Work Unit, and remained in that position within the Resource Analysis Section until his retirement in September 2011. After retirement Dave plans to do some long needed home renovations, travel, and increase the time he spends on his hobbies of photography and wood working.

KEN HIGGINBOTHAM

Ken graduated from Utah State University with a Bachelor of Science in Forestry in 1969 and a Masters of Science in Forestry in 1970. He then obtained a PhD in plant ecology from Duke University in 1974. Ken spent his university years working for the U.S. Forest Service and as a Research Assistant at the Utah State University. From 1975 to 1988 Ken was an Assistant and Associate Professor, Department of Forest Science at the University of Alberta. Courses taught were in forest ecology, silviculture and tree physiology. In 1985 Ken accepted a visiting Reforestation Specialist position with the Alberta Forest Service initiating work that lead to the revised provincial reforestation standards. In 1988 he became Director of the Forest Research Branch with the Alberta Forest Service; and in 1990 was appointed Assistant Deputy Minister, Alberta Forest Service (later Land and Forest Services). Accomplishments were new reforestation standards, initiation of the Alberta Forest Conservation Strategy, a revised stumpage system, initiation of an ecosystem management system and the reorganization and consolidation of the service. In 1995 Ken moved to British Columbia as the Vice-President and Chief Forester for Canfor Corporation. Although the job titles may have changed over the years at Canfor, Ken's role has always been focussed on forestry, environment and external relations. He has been the Vice-President Forestry and Environment since 2005, with responsibilities in both British Columbia and Alberta. Ken retires officially on October 31, 2011.

Ken and his wife Karen have five children and thirteen grandchildren, spread between British Columbia and Alberta. Although he has a number of at home projects to do, he also hopes to spend more time shooting skeet and sporting clays and will continue serving in the Vancouver Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. With forestry in his blood, you will know doubt see Ken picking up odd jobs in the future.



Obituaries

Doug Cameron Doug passed away on March 26th, 2011 at the age of 70 years. Doug served many years as the Forestry Technology School's warehouseman starting on April 25, 1966. He kept many an instructor and student well equipped for their forays into the woods to learn about forestry until his retirement on August 11, 1999. He is well known for the trademark cruise vest he wore at work.

Albert (Al) Walker Born February 12, 1938, Al passed away on April 19, 2011 at the age of 73. Al was a long time employee of the Alberta Forest Service. Al was the new Assistant Ranger at the Lovett Ranger Station when he attended and graduated from the Forestry Training School at Kananaskis in 1956. While at school, Al received word of his promotion to District Ranger at Conklin. He was then nick-named 'The Conklin Kid' by his classmates. Al was also stationed at Coalspur and Muskeg. In the early 1960s Al moved to Edson as the Land Use Officer. In 1967, Al moved to the Forest Technology School (now the Hinton Training Centre) where he taught until his retirement in 1995. Peter Murphy (Director at the time) said "we hired him for his woods skills, enthusiasm, ingenuity and adaptability – he was versatile and was always there to give a hand as needed".

Viggo Nielsen Viggo passed away on April 27, 2011 at the age of 78 years. He is survived by his loving wife of 50 years Edith Nielsen of Lac La Biche, two sons, four grandchildren and one great granddaughter. Viggo was the head cook at the Forestry Training School from the late 1980s until his retirement in 1998.

Judy Laviolette Judy passed away on May 7, 2011. She began her career with the Alberta Forest Service in 1984 working in many administrative roles with Forest Protection. Judy enjoyed quality time with her 5 grandchildren and was an avid traveller; visiting places throughout Europe, Southeast Asia and here at home in Canada.

Ron Lyle Born August 22, 1923, Ron passed away on June 20, 2011 at the age of 87 years. Ron was born in Gouldtown, SK, one of six children. His childhood was spent near Bergen, AB, and he attended school in Tilley. During World War II, Ron served three and a half years overseas in Italy and in France, returning to begin his 32 year career as a Forest Ranger with the Alberta Forest Service. After an early retirement to BC, he then joined the BC Forest Service where he worked until the age of 65. Ron Lyle was a Forest Ranger back in the days when all the work was accomplished on horseback. He spent a lot of time in the backcountry or at lonely patrol cabins with one loyal companion; a Pomeranian horse named Tony. Ron treasured the simple life and time spent on the trail hunting and fishing for his next meal. Ron dispensed tickets to poachers of big game, and sometimes had to send outfitters back to clean up their campsites. Rangers had to supply the lookout towers close to their station, monitor fish and game populations, and tend to the telephone lines that extended from southern to northern Alberta through the forest country for Alberta Forest Service use. A major job was fighting fires and keeping the backcountry safe.

Ron made local history in about 1949 when he took part in what was to become the last big forestry roundup of wild horses in the Clearwater Forest. Harry Edgcombe, ranger at the Meadow's Ranger Station, wrote a poem about the event: The Forestry Roundup. In 1952 Ron was badly mauled by a black bear and severely injured. The story tells how his strength of character, stamina and good sense helped him get back to where a network of Forestry friends could overcome many challenges to bring him safely into the hospital in Rocky Mountain House. Ron was stationed for many years at the Prairie Creek Ranger Station west of Rocky Mountain house, where he was living when he married Fran, and where children Dianne and Murray lived during their early years.

Teddy Gordon Bochon Ted passed away June 26, 2011 at the age of 65. He was born in Calgary on October 26, 1945 and moved with his parents to Lethbridge that same year; attending school there including the Lethbridge Collegiate Institute. Ted furthered his education in the

field of business administration attending Lethbridge Community College and the University of Lethbridge. In 1983 he received his Associate Degree in Fire Science from Spokane Community College. Ted began his working career in 1965 as a Park Ranger working with Alberta Provincial Parks at locations such as Willow Creek, Bragg Creek and Park Lake Provincial Parks. In September 1968, Ted became a firefighter with the Lethbridge Fire Department, later being promoted to Deputy Fire Chief in 1986. In 2002 Ted began to work for Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Forest Protection Division as a structural protection specialist, providing training and community wildfire planning across Alberta. His duties took him to many of Alberta's largest wildfires where he supervised crews assigned to community protection.

Julie Marie Beairsto Born April 15, 1948, Julie passed away on June 29, 2011 at the age of 63 years. Julie worked in aircraft accounts for the Alberta Forest Service, and subsequently Sustainable Resource Development, from 1983 until her retirement in 2007. Julie is survived by her husband Carl, two children and four grandchildren.

Donald Hamilton Born November 26, 1924, Don passed away on July 27, 2011 at the age of 86 years. Don is survived by his two daughters Lynn and Janis, and his eight grandchildren. Don was born in Havelock, Ontario and grew up in the Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan area during the depression years. He enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1943, graduating as a Pilot Officer navigator. After the war Don enjoyed life as a bush pilot in Northern Alberta, flying fish, trappers and supplies throughout the North. Eventually Don settled in Edmonton to raise a family and to establish his forest fire suppression company, Air Spray Aviation. Based in Red Deer, Alberta, Air Spray is recognized as a leader of aerial forest fire suppression around the world. Don's passion for aviation continued throughout his life. In May 2011 Don was inducted into Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame. Don was also a strong community supporter, serving on and donating to many charitable boards. See also: <http://albertaforesthistor.ca/docs/Newsletters/FHAA-Newsletter-Issue10-Feb2011.pdf>.

Gordon Fowlie Born October 8, 1919, Gordon passed away on August 12, 2011 at the age of 91 years. In 1938 Gordon attended the National Youth Forestry Training Program at the Highwood Ranger Station, a program funded by the Dominion Forest Service to provide work and training to unemployed youth. Gordon was the first towerman on Adams Creek Lookout, working there summers from 1940 to 1945. He then got a radio technician job with the Alberta Forest Service working for Radio Superintendent Tony Earnshaw. During the winter of 1945 he worked to help develop a para-cargo system to drop supplies into fire operations and lookouts. Test drops were carried out at Cooking Lake in the spring of 1946. Gordon worked on a light-weight cargo harness during the winter of 1946. This harness and cargo system was used into the mid 1970s. When asked about Gordon, Peter Murphy's response was that "Gordon was one of the stalwarts in the infant Radio Branch of the Alberta Forest Service, travelling by foot, horse, truck; and later planes and helicopters, to set up and keep running the radio communications system between fire lookouts, ranger stations and headquarters. It was an adventurous life, one he took in stride. We admired both his technical skills and stamina." Gordon retired from the Alberta Forest Service in 1976 after 35 year first as a lookout observer and later as a radio technician.

Max Mathon Born July 15, 1975, Max passed away unexpectedly on August 15, 2011 at the age of 36 years. Max was with the Department for over 11 years as a Helitack member, Forest Officer, Wildfire Ranger and Air Attack Officer in Edson, Fort McMurray and most recently in Edmonton at the Provincial Forest Fire Centre. Max was a truly genuine person who will be sadly missed by friends and colleagues. He is survived by his wife Laurie, daughter Ashley, son Eddie, brother Mark, mother and father.

Bob Steele passes away

Robert (Bob) Steele was born on August 30, 1923 in New Westminster, B.C., the sixth of eight children, and passed away on Saturday, October 1, 2011 at the age of 88 years. Bob was predeceased by his wife Iris, on July 4, 2011. Bob met Iris in Calgary in 1944 when he was attending a survival training course prior to heading to the Far East attached to an RAF Squadron, where he served as a navigator/bombardier during the Burma campaign. He returned in 1945, and married Iris in Banff, Alberta in 1947. Bob attended the University of British Columbia and graduated with a degree in Forestry in 1949.

In the spring of 1949, Eric Huestis, Director of Forestry, visited the University of British Columbia to explain his plans for the Alberta Forest Service, and his goals of improved forest management inventory and planning. Bob was one of the eight graduating foresters at the University of British Columbia that Huestis hired. Bob Steele, John Hogan and Trevor Charles were brought in

and loaned to the Photographic Surveys Corporation (PSC) for two years to work on the forest inventory in Alberta. Owen Bradwell, Stan Hughes, Jim Clark and Charlie Jackson were hired to be assistant forest superintendents at Blairmore, Calgary, Rocky Mountain House and Edson. Victor Heath and Bill Bloomberg, a 1943 graduate of the University of Wales, worked on various assignments in Edmonton, including establishment of the Forestry Training School in Kananaskis in 1951. These eight men represented the start of a revitalized Alberta Forest Service working to meet evolving demands and pressures in Alberta.

In 1956, following his inventory and forest management work with PSC and Forest Surveys Branch, Bob was selected to be Superintendent of the Clearwater Forest, located in Rocky Mountain House. In 1963, Bob returned to Edmonton to be Director of Forestry (now the Assistant Deputy Minister) of the Alberta Forest Service. In 1973, Bob was appointed Deputy Minister of Renewable Resources first under the Department of

Lands and Forests, and then the Department of Energy and Natural Resources. In 1979, Bob was transferred as Deputy Minister to Telephones and Utilities, retiring in 1982. Throughout his forestry career Bob was active and influential with the Rocky Mountain Section (RMS) of the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF), including chairman of the RMS in 1961-62. His input provided meaningful resolutions to many provincial land use issues and forest fire policies which are the background of many of today's programs.

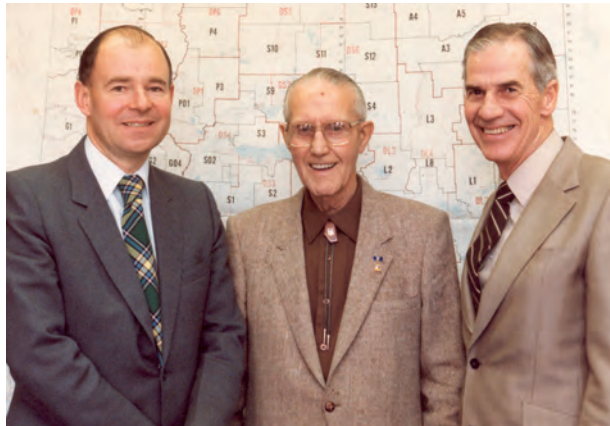
One of the first uses of aerial fire suppression was initiated by Bob as Forest Superintendent in 1958. Lightning had started a fire in the Atlas Lumber Company Camp 15 area on a weekend. He phoned Wetaskiwin AirSpray's Dave Harrington who flew down with his 200 U.S. gallon capacity Stearman crop duster, landing on the old gravel Highway 11 near the Shunda Ranger Station. He and Steele flew over the fire and decided water bombing

would be effective. Rangers loaded the plane on the highway and soon the fire was controlled. Steele commented that he was reprimanded for not obtaining approval first from head office, but no one was available to call at the time.

In 1969 as Director of Forestry, Bob reported that AFS head office was reorganized "because of increased interest in other uses of forest land and the necessity to implement greater administrative control of forestry policies and practices." Steele

reported in 1971: "The public has become much more concerned in recent years with the manner in which the forested areas of the province are being managed. This has resulted in careful and frequent reviews of forest land policies and practices and in greater complexities in administration."

Although progress had been made in building fire control capability, the system was severely tested in the spring of 1968. Bob is quoted as saying: "The many improvements during the year were marred by the worst forest fire year in Alberta's history. Fires destroyed almost one million



*Three Directors of Forestry who would later carry the title of Deputy Minister
L to R: Fred McDougall, Eric Huestis and Bob Steele, c.1979*



Forestry Tour, Thompson Creek, Upper Saskatchewan District, c1965

(L to R): Herb Hall, Minister Henry Ruste, unknown, Charlie Drain (possibly), Wally Hanson, Bob Steele, Ted Keats, unknown and Eric Huestis

acres of forestland, with most of the damage occurring during one week of extremely unfavourable weather in May. Settler fires became uncontrollable and swept into the forested areas in central Alberta with unprecedented vengeance. Only a small percentage of the fire-killed timber could be salvaged. This problem further demonstrates the necessity for greater control of settlers' burning practices and a much improved weather forecasting system."

Bob presided over a number of major developments, perhaps most notably in forest management and the development of the quota system, along with effective use of the growing aircraft fleet. Looking back in 2005 about his decade as Director of Forestry, he reflected "The fact that we developed (forest) management plans that were fairly comprehensive and enabled the province to become involved in a greater development of the timber resources is probably the best thing of that period. I took great deal of interest in it. I used to work extra hours all the time on management planning because I thought it was essential to do the job properly. I've always believed that you shouldn't get involved in things unless you know what you're doing or know what you're talking about. I think that

was probably the greatest thing, seeing the development of the forest industry to a significant extent in Alberta.

"I worked with Al Saunders on development of the Forest Technology program at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. We got along very well and everything worked out very satisfactorily with the Forest Technology School at Hinton and NAIT.

"The other thing that I thought worked out very well was the organization of our field offices. We set it up so the offices would be more efficient and more self-sufficient. We allowed them more scope to manage the business out there on their own without being interfered with too much, because I felt there were too many people in head office wanting to know every little thing that was going on out there and it was not an efficient way of handling it.

"There's no doubt that the use of aircraft made a tremendous difference. Pretty well every provincial government elsewhere in Canada eventually ended up with a lot of aircraft capabilities, but I think Alberta almost pioneered a lot of it and developed the ideas of how the system should be administered and what type of aircraft to use."



L to R: Brydon Ward, Terry Zitnak, Andy Gesner and Bruce Mayer, Lac La Biche, June 30, 2011



Patrick and Michelle Guidera performing at the Provincial Forest Fire Centre K-Days pancake breakfast, July 22, 2011



Jim Maitland and Darcy Beach, Peace River, April 9, 2011



Early 1950s Alberta Lands and Mines fire prevention poster, Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park Visitor Centre



Ashley Zavisha and Bruce Mayer, Zavisha Sawmills, Hines Creek, May 6, 2011

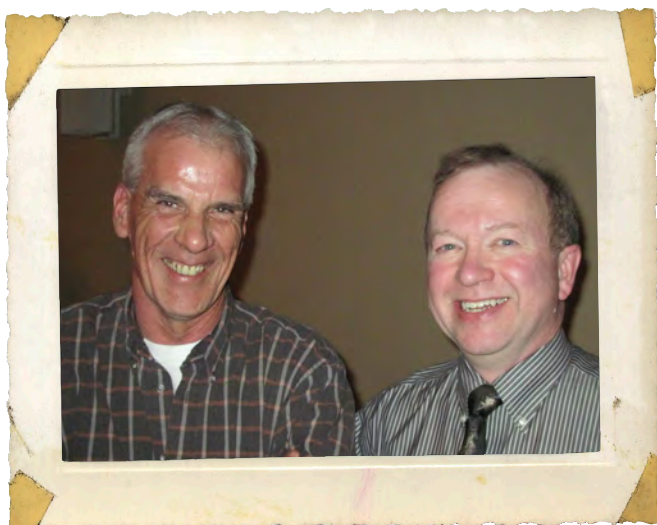
FHAA PHOTO CORNER



Gordon and Marg Bisgrove with Rob Manwaring at Rob's retirement party, Peace River, April 9, 2011



L to R: Brian Orum, Rick Arthur and Richard Paton at the base of a large white spruce tree found in the Spray Lakes valley, October 2010. Part of a larger stand, this tree measures 46.5 inches dbh and 115 feet tall.



Paul King, Rocky Wood Preservers and Butch Shenfield, Rocky Mountain House, March 25, 2011



Ashley and Gregory Zavisha, Zavisha Sawmills, Hines Creek, May 6, 2011



FHAA Directors meeting January 27, 2011
(L to R) Cliff Smith, Trevor Wakelin, Cliff Henderson, Peter Murphy, Bob Newstead, Butch Shenfield and Bruce Mayer



Fire patrol boat, the SS Rey, on the Athabasca River, near Athabasca, Alberta, 1916. This boat was based at Athabasca Landing and patrolled between Grand Rapids and Mirror Landing. It was 42 feet in length with a ten inch draught and a powerful engine to force the boat upstream against the fastest current. The skipper was the fire ranger and had a crew of an engineer, a fireman-stoker and whatever help was occasionally required. Patrol boats were on the alert for lightning strikes and campfires left by travellers who used the rivers as highways to the north.



L to R: Bob Mazurik, Chris McGuinty, Dennis Driscoll and Rob Thorburn, Peace River, April 9, 2011



L to R: Bill Griffiths, Bruce Hunter, Bruce MacGregor and Andy Gesner, Lac La Biche, June 30, 2011

TRAILS & TALES

Published by the Forest History Association of Alberta

Current membership: 114

Layout by Andre Lemay

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

