

# TRAILS & TALES

PUBLICATION OF THE FOREST HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA

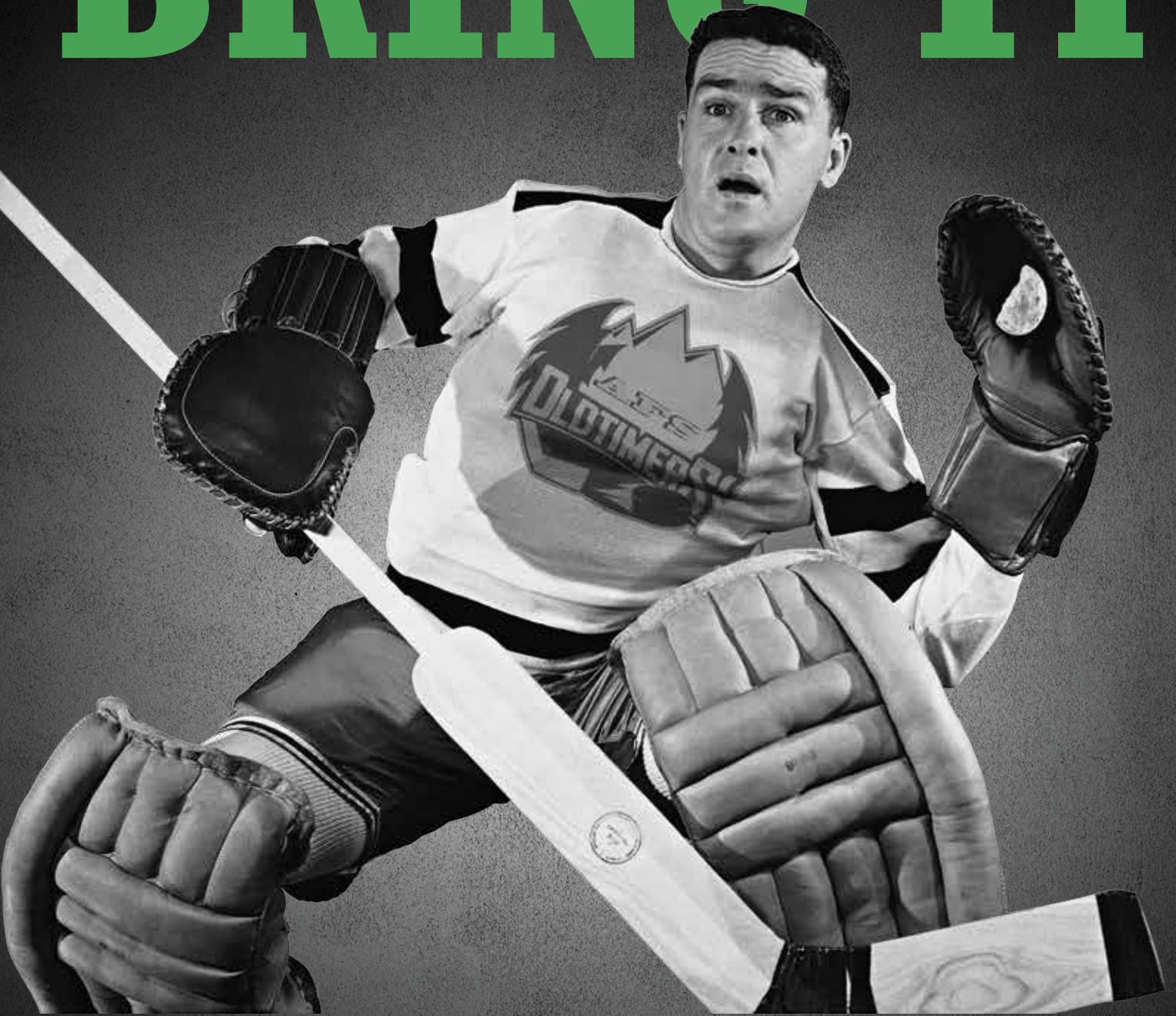
ALBERTA'S  
FORESTS



FEBRUARY 2019  
ISSUE #18

THE DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDS AND FORESTS

**DON'T FORGET YOUR TEETH AND  
BRING IT**



**35<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNUAL**

**AFS OLDTIMERS  
HOCKEY TOURNAMENT**

**MARCH 8-9, 2020**

**ATHABASCA MULTIPLEX | ATHABASCA, ALBERTA**

Contact Charlene Guerin at [Charlene.Guerin@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Charlene.Guerin@gov.ab.ca) to register to play hockey and/or help with the tournament (volunteers and referees needed).

# 18

BERTIE BEAVER TURNS 60!



# 28

THE SEVEN DAYS IN MAY 1968



# 50

30 MILLION SEEDLINGS PLANTED



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

02	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
14	VANDERWELL CONTRACTORS CELEBRATE 75 YEARS
18	BERTIE BEAVER TURNS 60!
28	THE 50 <sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEVEN DAYS IN MAY 1968
48	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF FORESTRY
50	NORTHLAND FOREST PRODUCTS PLANTS 30 MILLION SEEDLINGS
53	ALBERTA-PACIFIC FOREST INDUSTRIES CELEBRATES 25 YEARS
56	CLASS OF 1968 50 <sup>TH</sup> REUNION
60	SLAVE LAKE ANTHEM
61	FOOTNER LAKE ARBORETUM TURNS 50!
63	PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE CANADIAN FORESTRY CORPS
65	EMBER AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN WILDLAND FIRE SCIENCE
66	HOT OF THE PRESS: LEARNING FROM THE LANDSCAPE
69	FORESTRY DIVISION MEETING 1961
72	MARK YOUR CALENDAR
73	RETIREMENTS
89	OBITUARIES
94	FOREST HISTORY PHOTO CORNER



**2018 MEMBERSHIP: 149**  
(MEMBERSHIPS TRACKED ON A CALENDAR YEAR BASIS)

**ON THE COVER:** This version of Bertie Beaver appeared on a number of Department of Lands and Forests annual reports in the 1950s and 1960s.

# 120 ATTEND THE 14<sup>TH</sup> FOREST HISTORY MEETING



Bruce Mayer opened the meeting with introductions of those in attendance and provided an overview of the documents for review, which included the draft agenda, draft minutes from the March 15, 2017 meeting and a copy of the draft financial statement. Also included on the tables was the latest edition of the Trails & Tales, hot off the press. Directors in attendance were Bruce Mayer, Cliff Smith, Norm Denney, Ken Yackimec, Gordon Sanders and Bob Newstead. Guest speakers introduced were Ken Vanderwell with Vanderwell Contractors and Paul Lane with Air Spray. Special thanks were given to Travis Fairweather for the projector and sound system set-up; Jane Price, Charlene Guerin and Rick Harrison, who managed the front registration table; and Travis Fairweather again for taking still photographs throughout the night.

President Peter Murphy was unable to attend due to an ongoing flu, but provided some quick thoughts. Peter commented that the organization was growing, and there was more going on than he had ever envisioned. He was thankful for all those who made the effort to attend and thanked attendees for doing their best to capture, display and educate with Alberta's forest history. Bruce Mayer went on to thank the attendees, many of whom had travelled a long distance, and recognized road conditions were not the best on Highway's 43 and 63. Bruce also thanked Bob Newstead for his support in reviewing and editing draft newsletter content.

Second-generation forester, Matthew Kristoff provided an overview of the Your Forest podcast he created. Calling it essentially a radio show online, Matthew created the podcast after finding a gap

for current resource management information that would help educate and influence himself and other professionals. For those interested in talking to Matthew or guesting on his podcast, the easiest contact is at [YourForestpodcast@gmail.com](mailto:YourForestpodcast@gmail.com).

Dan Wilkinson was unable to make it at the last minute, so Bruce Mayer provided an overview of the 2018 Canadian Institute of Forestry national conference to be held in Grande Prairie, September 18 to 20, 2018, hosted by the Rocky Mountain Section. Dan is the program chair; Jeff Renton is organizing the agenda. The theme for the conference is Sustaining Resources and Enhancing Communities, Looking Back and Going Forward. The intent is to recognize and incorporate learnings from the past as we move forward in forest and land management. Bruce Mayer indicated that he

would be chairing the forest history session, and had Pat Wearmouth and Peter Murphy lined up as two of the three speakers.

Keith McClain notified attendees of an upcoming workshop planned for April 24 and 25, 2018; co-chaired by fRI Research and the Canadian Institute of Forestry Rocky Mountain Section. The theme for the 2018 Forest Forum was Alberta's Forests are Under Threat: A Call to Action. The workshop will focus on the threats to forests, risks and outline the research that the TRIAA Network and fRI Research have completed or have underway; and how forests contribute to the vitality of the community.

Keith also took a minute to talk about the United Nations Forests and Sustainable Cities

video played at the start of the meeting. His comments recognized the value of urban forests, but the development of roads and buildings tend to damage and destroy those same urban forests.

Bob Bott explained the 25-year history of the Foothills Model Forest and subsequent fRI Research organization has taken on a life of its own, and has taken more time and effort than Bob Udel and he had envisioned at the start. Bob mentioned that each chapter will have a historical context, and the entire book will be a good read and reference document to all FHAA AGM attendees. Bob did start by talking about the 'bomb simulation' research done in the 1960s in the Hinton area; where governments and military wanted to understand the effects of a nuclear explosion

in a European forest. Background history is within the 2003 book, *Learning from the Forests*.

Pieter Van Der Shoot provided a quick summary of the Breton and District Historical Society and the work they have done at their museum. In the 1920s and 1930s, the Breton and Winfield area had a large forest industry presence, with 3,000 to 4,000 people living and working in the area. The museum has a wealth of photographic and factual material, and is recognized for its material celebrating Black settlement history in Alberta. Pieter also talked about private land forests, and said we should not lose sight of their importance. In Canada, there are 450,000 to 500,000 landowners with forests, providing 21 per cent of Canada's fibre supply. In the United States, there are five million landowners with forests, providing nearly 80 per cent of the United States fibre supply. In Europe, over ten million landowners have forested land.

There are nine directors within the association, elected on a three-year rotation; three representing government; three representing forest industry; and three representing the public. The directors provide oversight,



1. Bruce Mayer opening the 14th annual Forest History Association AGM

2. Matthew Kristoff with an overview of his Your Forest podcast work

3. Keith McClain outlining the upcoming fRI Research and the Canadian Institute of Forestry Rocky Mountain Section workshop on April 24 and 25, 2018

guidance and focus on the yearly work of the Forest History Association of Alberta. Positions up for election at the 2018 AGM were the government position held by Ken Yackimec, the forest industry position held by Cliff Smith and the public position held by Bob Newstead. Butch Shenfield resigned prior to the meeting, and a one-year replacement for the government position was also open for election. Ken Yackimec (government), Katie McNaughton (public) and David Wall (industry) were acclaimed, with Graham Legaarden being elected to fill the one-year government position.

A third-generation owner/operator, Ken Vanderwell gave a great presentation on the 75 years of Vanderwell logging and sawmilling history. Starting from their emigration to Canada to Keephills,

Alberta in 1910; the Vanderwell logging history began in 1943 when Barney Vanderwell and his partners, brother-in-law Harry Dumouchel and father-in-law Mike Paul Sr., started the sawmill company in the Keephills area, south of Wabamun Lake. "We gotta do something to support the farm ..." was the reality of the day, and winter logging and sawmilling fit the bill. The Vanderwell's operated north of Red Earth, near Chisholm and finally at their current location in Slave Lake. The full story will be included in the 2019 Trails and Tales newsletter.

Paul Lane, Vice President and COO of Air Spray, provided a 50+ year overview of the company's past, and prospects for the future. During their research Paul and his wife Lynn Hamilton, President and CEO, found the original Air Spray history began in 1954 with Dave

Harrington as company founder, spraying farmers fields with his Stearman bi-plane aircraft. The initial firefighting contract was signed with the Alberta government in 1958, leading to further contracts over the years with Air Spray's Thrush Commanders, TBM Avengers, Douglas B26's, Canadair CL-215s and finally the Lockheed L188 Electra. Don Hamilton partnered with Dave Harrington in 1969, eventually becoming the sole owner in 1972. Don's vision and ambition built Air Spray into an international aerial wildfire suppression company. Don passed away at the age of 86, two months after being inducted into the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame. Air Spray has expanded operations to the United States with its Air Tractor 802 wheeled and amphibious aircraft and the next generation jetengine airtanker BAE 146.





1. Bob Bott with an overview of the 25-year Foothills Model Forest / fRI Research history project he and Bob Udell are finalizing

2. Pieter Van Der Shoot explaining the importance of the work and collections of the Breton and District Historical Society

3. L to R: Graham Legaarden being congratulated by Rick Arthur on his election as a new FHAA director

4. Ken Vanderwell providing an overview of Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd. 75 year history

5. Paul Lane with an overview of the Air Spray 50+ year history

6. Jane Price drawing names for door prizes

7. Bruce Mayer giving Mark Freedman a door prize of the Northern Rockies Eco Tour book







1. FHAS 2018 Attendees

2. L to R: Lowell Lyseng and Stan Kavalinas

3. L to R: Jerry Sunderland and David Morgan

4. L to R: Terry Jessiman and Bill Bereska (Gary Davis in background)

5. L to R: Bob Young and Bob Newstead

6. L to R: John Belanger, Herb Walker and Owen Spencer (Wally Born in foreground)

7. Ken Yackimec inviting all 1983 NAIT Forest Technology graduates to a 35th anniversary gathering in September 2018

8. L to R: Robert Stronach and Jean Lussier



## 2018 FHAS EXECUTIVE

Peter Murphy,  
*President*

Katie McNaughton,  
*Vice President*

Bruce Mayer,  
*Secretary Treasurer*

Norm Denney, *Director*

Graham Legaarden, *Director*

Gord Sanders, *Director*

Rob Thorburn, *Director*

Ken Yackimec, *Director*

David Wall, *Director*





1. L to R: Ken Vanderwell, Roberta Willis and Les Zeller (Wayne Williams in the foreground)

2. Bernie Schmitte

3. L to R: Robert Stronach and Ed Trenchard

4. L to R: Jason Cottingham, Marty O'Byrne, Amy Wotton and Dale Thomas. Background: Dana Archibald

5. L to R: Ryan Good and Jane Price

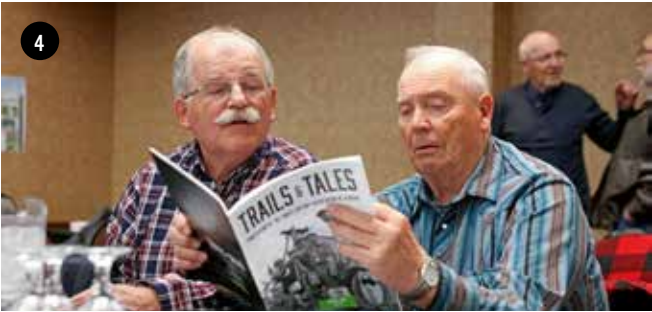
6. L to R: Wally Peters and Marc Freedman

7. L to R: Byron Grundberg, Katie Lamoureux and Terry Jessiman

8. L to R: Michelle Shesterniak and Therese Yacyshyn

9. L to R: Sean MacNeil, Morgan Kehr and Cory Davis







1. L to R: Fred McDougall,  
Cliff Smith, and Bob Newstead

2. L to R: Ken Vanderwell and  
David Wall

3. L to R: Herb Cerezke and  
Byron Grundberg

4. L to R: Gerald Carlson and Gary  
Davis

5. L to R: Bob Young and Brian  
Hohner

6. L to R: Matthew Kristoff and  
Lowell Lyseng

7. L to R: Robert Stronach and Garry  
Ehrentaut

8. L to R: Cliff Smith and Dave  
Patterson

9. L to R: Marty O'Byrne and Darcy  
Evanochko

10. L to R: Stan Kavalinas and  
Kathleen (Katie) McNaughton







1. L to R: Forrest Barrett and Patrick McIlwaine

2. L to R: Bill Tinge and Wayne Johnson

3. L to R: Gordon Glover and Kevin Freehill

4. L to R: Tracy Parkinson and Bill Tinge

5. L to R: Normand Dupuis and Dalibor Houdek

6. L to R: Robert Stronach, Ed Trenchard and Kim Bauer

7. L to R: Bob Newstead and Al Benson





# VANDERWELL CONTRACTORS (1971) LTD. CELEBRATE 75 YEARS

BY KEN VANDERWELL AND CON DERMOTT



Initially, there were eight Vanderwell siblings, five boys and three girls. They came over from Holland on the Rotterdam in 1910, with Barney the 4th oldest, and being born at sea. They landed in New York, travelled to be with family in Ontario, and then moved out to Keephills, Alberta where they homesteaded. In 1943, Bob Vanderwell's father Barney, and his partners, brother-in-law Harry Dumouchel, and father-in-law Mike Paul Sr., started a sawmill operation in the Keephills area, south of Wabamun Lake. The three partners obtained a contract from Swanson Lumber Company to log and saw lumber during that winter. The main purpose of getting into the sawmill industry in the winter months was to raise money to help support the farm. The first year of operation, the sawmill produced 30,000 fbm of rough dimension lumber. As the years went by they continued to operate the sawmill during the winter months, producing lumber for Swanson. Eventually, Mike Paul Sr. thought there were easier ways to make a living, and he sold his shares to Barney and Harry. Things were not easy in those days as all logging was carried out with horses and camps were very primitive, however, camp-food was one thing to look forward to, as most of the cooks were the men's wives. In the Vanderwell camp, Margaret, Barney's wife and Josie, Harry's wife alternated as camp cooks. Due to illness, Harry sold his shares to Barney's brother Dick Vanderwell, and the two brothers continued to operate the company as partners until 1961.

In 1954, 15-year-old Bob Vanderwell started working for the company. The operation had relocated from the Granada-Wildwood area, to Chisholm, south of Slave Lake; and they continued to "gyppo" for the Swanson Lumber Company by logging and sawing rough lumber during the winter months. Things started to change in the forest industry as more machinery was used in the logging, and sawmill technology started to improve. In 1957, Barney and Margaret left the farm and moved to Stony Plain. Bob married Karen in 1959, and became a full partner of the company with his father in 1961. However, even though the company had contracts with Swanson to produce rough lumber during the winter months, they still had to work during the summer to make ends meet, so they used their machinery, equipment and trucks to haul gravel, dig basements and do other work that was available in the Stony Plain area.

The Vanderwell company operated in an excellent stand of timber south of Slave Lake, however in 1968, a major forest fire not only destroyed the timber, but also the sawmill and logging camp which was idle during the summer months. As a result of the fire, there was too much fire killed timber for Swanson Lumber to utilize, and Vanderwell Contractors were awarded their own timber licence by Con Dermott, the Regional Forester at Slave Lake. This was a major change and opportunity for the company; they rebuilt the sawmill and camp, and not only did they produce their own rough lumber, but now they sold that lumber to lumber brokers at a much higher price. Bob Vanderwell used to say, "We were selling lumber for \$90 per thousand board feet, rather than \$32 per thousand."

Bob as a partner, always recognized the importance of a secure timber supply to supply the mill on a continuous basis, so in 1969 with the cash earnings from \$90 lumber, the company acquired a long-term timber quota from the Alberta government in the S15 forest management unit



1. Vanderwell Brothers truck hauling hay bales from their Keephills farm, 1950s

2. Bob Vanderwell

3. Vanderwell trucks at their sawmill site near Chisholm, south of Slave Lake; early 1960s

4. New power facility under construction; Slave Lake; mid 2010s

5. "The Blackline", a new tandem ring de-barker and a second HewSaw were installed to address burnt timber as a result of 1998 wildfires in the Slave Lake area; 1999

## Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd. Celebrate 75 Years



north of Red Earth Creek. However, due to access limitations, Vanderwell was unable to utilize their newly purchased timber, so for the next two winters Gordon Buchanan, of Buchanan Lumber in High Prairie allowed Vanderwell to operate and produce Buchanan's quota volume in the S10 forest management unit near Otter Lake. So the sawmill was established at Cadotte Lake with a planer mill at Nampa for a couple years. Finally, in 1971, the sawmill was moved and established 50 kilometres north of Red Earth, with the rough lumber trucked to the planer mill which had been moved to the Mitsue Industrial Park, east of Slave Lake. This scenario allowed the company to operate the sawmill in the winter months, and then move the crew to the planer mill in the summer to dress the lumber for sale. In 1978, Vanderwell moved their sawmill to the same site as the planer mill at Mitsue. This was a major change as all logging took place north of Red Earth Creek, with tree-length raw logs being loaded and transported over 300 kilometres to Slave Lake for manufacturing. Vanderwell Contractors were one of the first companies to introduce a centralized mill operating year round.



Bob Vanderwell continued to look for long-term timber supply opportunities in order to grow and operate the mill facility on a year-round basis. So, in 1984 Vanderwell Contractors purchased the Canadian Forest Industry's operations in the Chisholm/Slave Lake area. That same year, Barney passed away before the sale was complete. The purchase marked an important step forward as Vanderwell began to acquire long-term wood supply for its facility. Ken joined the company about this time as well. Knowing how important it would be for their future, Vanderwell also purchased the Hett and Sibbald quotas south of Enilda. The purchase of these quotas had a manufacturing condition that all timber had to be produced within that area. Knowing this, Bob still went ahead and purchased the timber, and immediately followed it up with a trade with the Bissell Brothers of Enilda. From this point forward, Vanderwell continued to purchase secure long-term timber tenure from other companies or government timber sales, understanding what was needed to maintain the company long-term. As a special purchase, Vanderwell was successful in 1987 in purchasing Bigstone Cree Nation's timber. In 1984, the first dry-kiln was built at the Mitsue millsite, with a J-bar sorter added in 1989.



Now that the company had sufficient timber to operate on a continuous basis under sustainable forest management principles, efforts were directed towards better utilization and improving the growth of their reforested areas. The 1990's began a real decade of growth for Vanderwell. A chipper room and bins were added on the heels of the sorter upgrade; a second and third line HewSaw was installed; and in 1993, a new turnkey planer mill was built. About this time, Bob became concerned with the amount of private land timber going to British Columbia, and, in 1996, the company embarked on an aggressive private land purchase program. Vanderwell Contractors is now the largest holder of private timberlands in Alberta. In all their harvesting operations, the company maintains high utilization standards and all plans consider other uses such as water and wildlife protection. In order to maintain a long-term secure wood supply, the company reforests all harvested blocks to provincial standards immediately after harvesting.

Today, Vanderwell continues to improve their operations by implementing the latest technology and as a result have one of the most efficient and modern sawmill facilities in Alberta. This technology allows Vanderwell to achieve one of the highest utilization standards in the industry. When updating the mills, the company considers the utilization of by-products that were normally burnt as waste, now a thing of the past at Vanderwell. Today all by-products are utilized; wood chips for pulp mills, shavings for livestock bedding, sawdust for wood pellets and bark to produce power and heat. It's been a pretty good outcome from the humble beginnings of "we gotta to do something to support the farm!" from 75 years ago.



1. New sawmill built after the Vanderwell sawmill burned in the 1968 wildfires; note the sawing of burnt timber; 1968

2. Aerial view, Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd. sawmill site; Mitsue Industrial Park; Slave Lake; 2017

3. Con Dermott showing tree growth on white spruce trees; Vanderwell private land reforestation holdings; Slave Lake; mid 2010s

4. Barney Vanderwell

5. Bob Vanderwell joined the family sawmill business in 1954, at the age of 15; here he is at the sawmill at Cadotte Lake

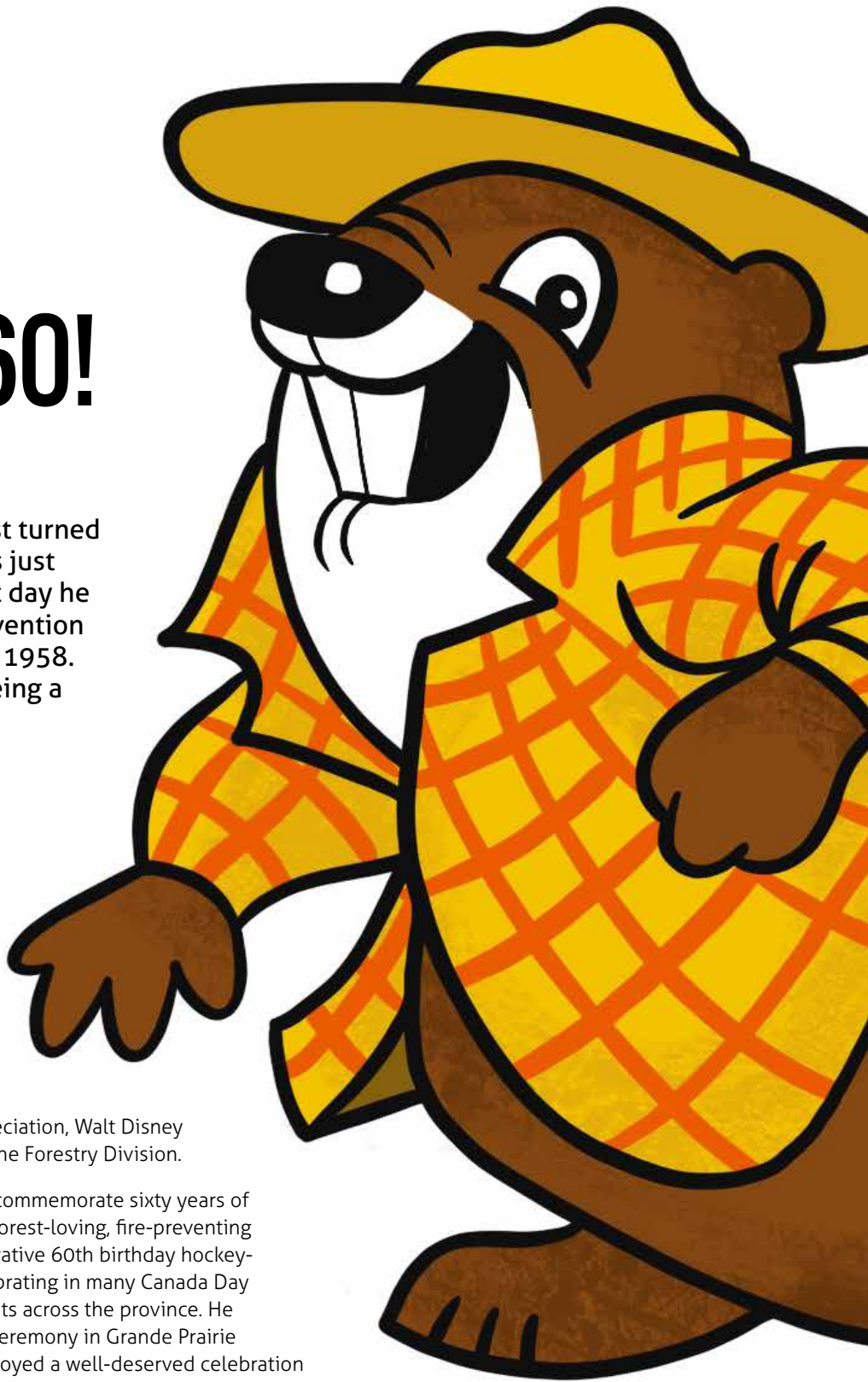
# BERTIE BEAVER TURNS 60!

BY MELISSA STORY

Bertie Beaver may have just turned sixty this year, but he looks just the same as he did the first day he showed up on wildfire prevention posters all the way back in 1958. That is the advantage of being a timeless cartoon mascot, drawn by none other than Walt Disney himself.

Bertie Beaver was offered as a gift to the people of Alberta in 1958. Forestry staff and Walt Disney's film crews worked together in Kananaskis Country to complete several wildlife documentaries as part of Disney's True Life Adventure Series. One of these documentaries involved the life of beavers. In appreciation, Walt Disney drew Bertie Beaver as a mascot for the Forestry Division.

Alberta rolled out the red carpet to commemorate sixty years of Bertie Beaver, everyone's favourite forest-loving, fire-preventing mascot. Clad in a special commemorative 60th birthday hockey-style jersey, Bertie saw himself celebrating in many Canada Day parades and throughout public events across the province. He also participated in a tree planting ceremony in Grande Prairie commemorating Arbour Day and enjoyed a well-deserved celebration at the Blairmore Pool and Farmers Market, spreading birthday cheer with residents. Each of the ten forest areas along with headquarters in Edmonton hosted events to celebrate Bertie's milestone birthday.



When Alberta Forestry Week rolled around, Bertie was again at the forefront of the festivities, flipping burgers and handing out birthday cake at an Agriculture and Forestry barbeque in downtown Edmonton. Then, alongside Minister Oneil Carlier, he popped into Coronation School to share stories with grade one students and gave out all the high-fives and hugs they could handle. Just when it looked as though celebrations seemed to be winding down, Bertie was at it again, this time for Premier Rachel Notley herself, as he accepted the prestigious honour of being introduced into the

Legislative Assembly of Alberta as a special guest during their session on May 10, 2018. Truly, a great honour, and a real highlight in a year that was already full of milestones.

Bertie Beaver has been an iconic figure in Alberta for the past sixty years sharing his message of forest conservation and environmental stewardship. Here's to hoping Bertie's celebrations continue for years to come. Happy Birthday Bertie.



1. Walt Disney with Bertie Beaver; McCall Field; Calgary airport; 1965

2. This Bertie Beaver painting was at the Slave Lake curling rink, origin unknown. Now at the Slave Lake Forest Area office, 2018





1. Bertie Beaver with Oneil Carlier, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry; Alberta Forest Week Barbeque; May 9, 2018

2. Bertie Beaver with Travis Fairweather inside the Alberta Legislature; May 10, 2018

3. Bertie Beaver sitting at the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry's desk; May 10, 2018

4. Bertie Beaver with Alberta legislature in the background; May 10, 2018

5. Bertie Beaver with High Level Forest Area staff; Canada Day parade; July 1, 2018

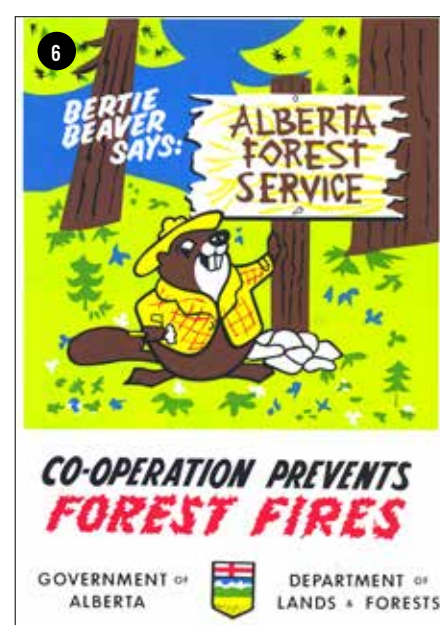
6. Bertie Beaver riding a mechanical bull; Lac La Biche; September 1, 2018

7. Vaughn Heggie, Grade 5 student at Westview School in Fort McMurray, with his Bertie Beaver lego creation; October 2018

8. L to R: Jeff Stokes, Dylan Ulliyot, David Park, Bertie Beaver (Alan Gammon), Lucas Beattie, Carson Jones (Sub Leader), Mike Gendron (Rappel Spotter); Bertie Beaver rappel training; summer 2018

9. Bertie Beaver lego creation and Bertie Beaver squeeze doll

10. L to R: Bertie Beaver and Bruce Mayer; Bertie Beaver celebrating his 50th Birthday; May 2008



1-6. Early Bertie Beaver prevention posters; late 1950s

7. Bertie Beaver celebrating Margarete Hee's 50th birthday; August 2005

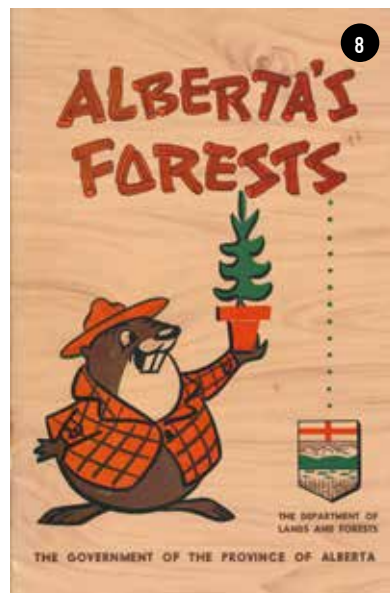
8. Alberta Lands and Forests Annual Report, featuring Bertie Beaver; 1966

9. Bertie Beaver with young students; 1980s

10. Bertie Beaver with young students; 1980s

11. L to R: Nicole Marvin, Georges Laraque (Edmonton Oilers), Bertie Beaver; Klondike Days; 2006

12. Bertie Beaver relaxing outside the Peace River Provincial Building; May 2008







3

1. Bertie Beaver at his 50th birthday celebration; Peace River; May 2008

2. L to R: Minister Oneil Carlier, Bertie Beaver, Bruce Mayer; Lac La Biche Pow Wow Days; July 2016

3. Bertie Beaver with Bev Yee; Alberta Forest Week; May 8, 2013

4. Bertie Beaver on a trike; Edson area parade; 1970s

5. Bertie Beaver fire danger sign

6. Bertie Beaver coaching Bruce Mayer on sausage preparation; Provincial Forest Fire Centre Klondike Days breakfast; July 21, 2017

7. Bertie Beaver with a drawing done of himself; Provincial Forest Fire Centre Klondike Days breakfast; July 21, 2017

8. Updated painting of Bertie Beaver at Prairie Creek; spring 2008

9. Bertie Beaver; Slave Lake Headquarters sign; 1968



6



8



9





1. L to R: Smoky the Bear, Sparky the Fire Dog, Bertie Beaver; Partners in Protection; 1982

2. Alberta Forest Service DC3 CF-IAE with Bertie Beaver on the tail; 1960s

3. L to R: Tricia Ashton, Bertie Beaver, Amera Haymour; Provincial Forest Fire Centre Klondike Days pancake breakfast; July 2009

4. Slave Lake Forest parade featuring Bertie Beaver; Forest Officer Wayne Bowles in uniform; 1981

5. Bertie Beaver in the High Level Canada Day parade: July 1, 2018

6. Premier Ed and Marie Stelmach, with Bertie Beaver at the Capital Exhibition; July 24, 2007

7. Ranger Ron Lyle with a Bertie Beaver painting completed by local Minimum Security crew; Prairie Creek; spring 1966

8. Slave Lake Forest parade featuring Bertie Beaver; 1981

9. Alberta Forest Service's Eric Huestis, Director of Forestry, with a Bertie Beaver prevention poster; November 1960

10. Bertie Beaver with his eggs and bacon breakfast; Alberta Wildfire Coordination Centre Klondike Days breakfast; July 20, 2018

11. Bertie Beaver and Oneil Carlier, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry; handing out seedlings to Grade 1 students at Coronation School; Alberta Forest Week; May 8, 2018

12. Wood token; Bertie Beaver's 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday; 1998



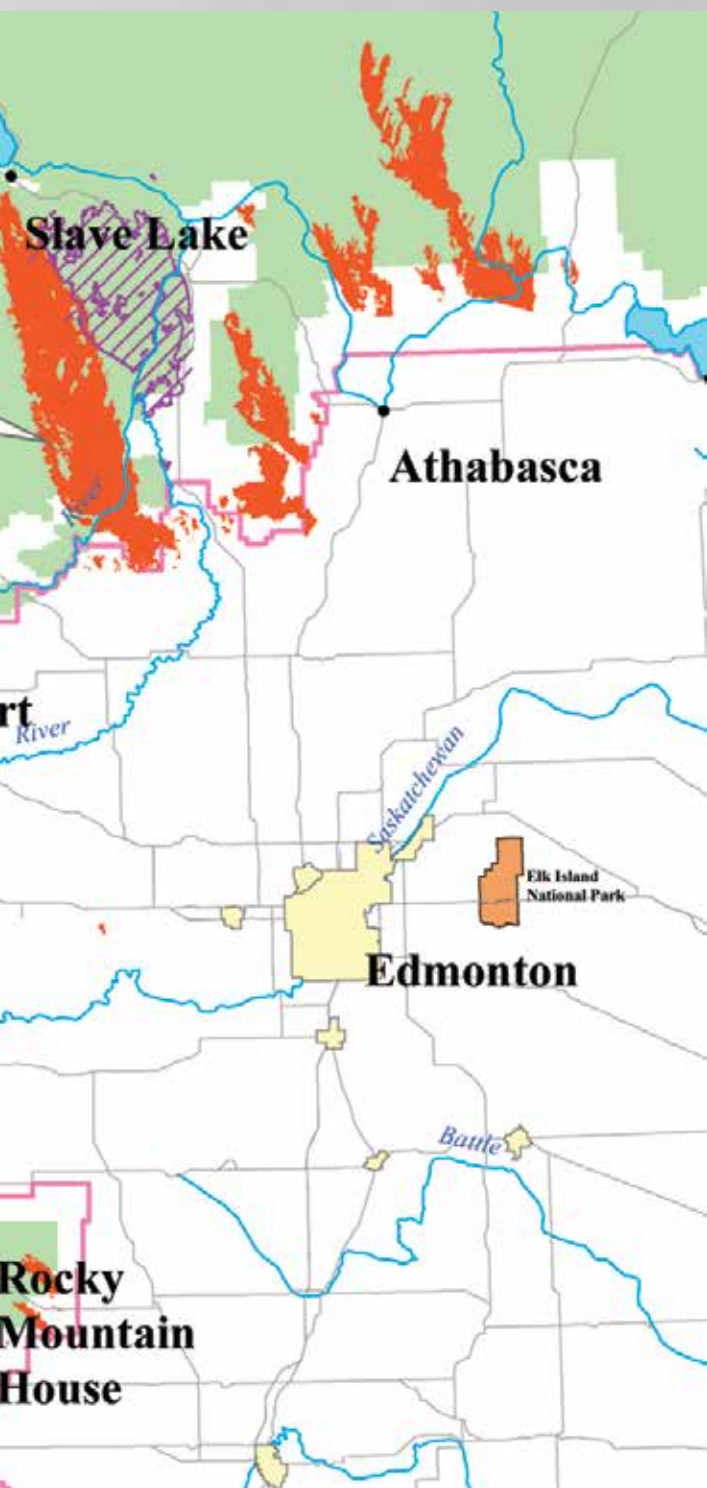
# THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEVEN DAYS IN MAY 1968

*The 1968 fire season was the most disastrous on record, and a significant turning point for the Alberta wildland fire organization. A number of summary and review documents were completed following the 1968 fire season; this summary is intended to capture key sections from those documents, with personal summaries from those directly involved. Some of the statistics do not fully match from report to report, most likely a function of timing and data availability.*



# THE MAY 1968 CONFLAGRATIONS IN CENTRAL ALBERTA

BY A. D. KIIL AND J. E. GRIGEL



In 1968, Alberta experienced an extremely severe spring forest fire season. During the 15-day period from May 16 to 31, 250 fires burned more than 950,000 acres of forest land. The suppression of these fires involved over 100 aircraft, retardant planes and helicopters, 580 bulldozers and an army of about 5,000 firefighters. Firefighting costs exceeded 4 million dollars. Most of the forest conflagrations occurred in a 150-mile semi-circular strip across central Alberta. This area borders on a transition zone from forest to prairie where land clearing and debris burning is prevalent. Hundreds of settler fires were burning adjacent to this forest zone before and during the peak fire period and many of these subsequently spread into the forested zone. The largest single conflagration, a 330,000-acre blaze south of Lesser Slave Lake (Vega wildfire), had as its source several settler fires in the agricultural zone which united and was swept in a northwesterly direction by the high winds.

The peak of the 1968 debris-burning season in agricultural areas coincided with an unusually long period of hot and dry weather. On May 16, a large air mass settled over central Canada and resulted in strong south-easterly winds over much of central Alberta. This air mass was the single most important cause of fuel drying and the extremely rapid fire spread.

1. Colour map of May 1968 wildfires;  
created by Jamie Badcock

2. (Next Page) Fire weather observations and fire danger conditions at 1300 MDT May 23, 1968. Table located on Page 30 was created by Marty Alexander for his analysis of the Vega Fire.

2

Fire weather observations and fire danger conditions at 1300 MDT on May 23, 1968, from 10 surrounding weather stations prior to the major run of the Lesser Slave Lake Fire

No. <sup>1</sup>	Station Name	Elevation (m ASL)	Dry-bulb temperature (°C)	Relative Humidity (%)	Wind <sup>4</sup> Direction	Speed (km/h)	Total rain <sup>2</sup> (mm)	Fine Fuel Moisture Code (FFMC)	Duff Moisture Code (DMC)	Drought Code (DC)	Initial Spread Index (ISI)	Buildup Index (BUI)	Fire Weather Index (FWI)
1	Lac La Biche DOT	559	22.8	21	S	32 (40) <sup>3</sup>	9.0 (14)	95	61	273	43	78	71
2	Wagner DOT	584	10.7	64	N	6	42.4 (8)	87	35	184	4	47	17
3	Whitecourt DOT	741	20.0	29	SE	19	49.6 (17)	93	58	161	17	61	35
4	Flattop LO	1030	15.6	19	SE	28	32.1 (9)	93	41	116	27	43	40
5	Swan Dive LO	1272	15.6	39	SE	33 (52)	25.2 (11)	90	32	162	21	43	34
6	Deer Mtn. LO	1122	16.1	40	SE	28 (46)	21.3 (10)	90	32	165	18	42	30
7	Chisholm LO	677	21.1	28	SE	35 (54)	7.1 (15)	94	58	284	41	77	67
8	Smith HS	564	23.9	37	SE	2	11.4 (8)	93	63	298	24	83	49
9	Slave Lake HQ	585	21.1	32	SW	18	32.0 (8)	82	45	254	14	62	31
10	Vega LO	701	21.1	30	SE	46 (65)	16.0 (16)	93	53	245	68	69	86

<sup>1</sup> As measured at a height of 10 m in the open on level terrain.

<sup>2</sup> Measured between spring starting date and May 23. All stations began observations on May 1 except Lac La Biche (April 25), Wagner (April 29), Whitecourt (April 25), and Vega (May 2). The number of days since ≥ 0.6 mm of rain occurred is noted in parentheses.

<sup>3</sup> Refers to the numbered fire weather stations on the map.

<sup>4</sup> Reported gusts in parentheses.

# SEVEN DAYS OF MAY

BY JOCK MCLEAN AND BLANE COULCHER

Forest fires of uncontrolled violence devastated vast areas of Alberta’s forests during the third week of May 1968. The fires established two new records; the greatest number of outbreaks ever recorded so early in the season, and the largest acreage ever incinerated so early in the season. The period was characterized by low humidities, above normal temperatures, and strong persistent southerly winds. On one day, May 24, 1968, in the Swan Hills area, the forward spread of a fire through mature timber was over 40 miles. Fire intensity was extreme with spruce trees, 24 inches in diameter, snapped off by the force of fire wind turbulence at peak periods. The fires burned over 900,000 acres in total, with timber loss estimated to exceed two billion board feet. One sawmill was destroyed (Vanderwell south of Slave Lake), and several timber quotas were severely disrupted.

Suppression costs ran over five million dollars. Fortunately, no lives were lost and property loss was not high, although several settled areas had to be evacuated during the peak of the fires. The serious rash of fire outbreaks was the result of an accumulation and simultaneous combination of five main factors. First, the areas that bore the brunt of the spring fires had been subjected to a severe drought during the previous summer. This was followed by an unusually mild, dry winter and in the spring further warm weather had evaporated most of the remaining snow cover thus exposing vast areas of dry, cured grass. During the middle of May, a large number of brush fires were ignited upwind from the forested areas. This, coupled with the development of a blocking weather pattern aloft and strong, dry, southerly winds at the surface, produced the necessary conditions

for a critical outbreak of forest fires.

All fires were man-caused and originated mainly from land clearing and brush burning operations outside, adjacent to, and upwind of the forest protection boundary to the south. A few fires were caused by carelessness and a few possibly by incendiarism, but the major fires were initially lit by settlers taking advantage of the clear, warm weather over the Victoria Day long weekend to burn brush and windrows along the southern fringe areas of the coniferous zone. It is estimated that nearly 1,000 settlement fires were burning outside of the forest protection boundary on May 18, 1968, in a narrow strip of land clearing operations that extended from Rocky Mountain House north to Whitecourt, and east to the Saskatchewan border.

# SPRING FIRES 1968

BY R.S. MIYAGAWA

The year 1968 was a difficult spring fire year for the Alberta Forest Service. Lack of precipitation during the previous winter and a dry spring created a severe drought condition. Coupled with high persistent southeast winds, only ignition sources were needed to create a serious fire problem. The ignition sources were present. This is a special report on the spring fires and it will deal only with the statistical aspects of the fires.

As can be noted, the number of fires between May 17 and May 25 is better than half the total for the period up to the end of May. This report will be based on the 185 fires which occurred between May 17 and May 25, since these fires burned over 99 percent of the total area for the year.

The origin of fires shows that in 1968, May 17 to May 25, approximately 50 percent of the fires started on private property. The total acreage burned for the year 1968 is close to 1,002,000 acres. It appears from the total that 99 percent of the total area was burned in the early period. It also shows that 95 percent of the acreage was burned in three Forests; Lac La Biche, Slave Lake and Whitecourt. There was a total of 48 "E" class fires which burned 983,678 acres during the period. Eighty-five percent of the forest burned was Crown land.

It is estimated, by the Forest Management Branch, that of the 614,642 million fbm lost, approximately 200 million fbm is expected to be salvaged. Thus, our net loss would be about 400 million fbm. No estimate on salvage of pulpwood has been made. Considering only the saw timber losses, the total volume burned would more than equal one year of quota for all the timber operators in Alberta. The loss of coniferous cords in the Crown land is more than eight years of cut for a pulp mill of the size presently located in Alberta (Northwest Pulp and Power, Hinton). The net loss of timber dues is around eight million dollars. Timber dues loss only is, however, an underestimation of the

loss to the economy of the Province. A more realistic valuation of the loss must be considered because labour can transform this raw material into some commodity, which has a demand and can be sold.

There is a question of how far in the manufacturing process we should take our values. In the case of lumber we have the choice of log at the mill, green lumber at the mill or dressed lumber at the railroad siding. Since most of the lumber manufacturing costs are due to labour costs, the use of dressed lumber price at the railroad siding would not be unrealistic. According to the Forest Management Branch, \$60.00 per thousand fbm would be a conservative price for dressed dimension lumber at the railroad siding. Coniferous pulpwood value was placed at \$17.00 per cord. There is no demand for deciduous timber at the present; therefore, no value was placed on it. The loss on coniferous timber amounts to over seventy million dollars.

On top of such basic timber losses are other less tangible losses, which would include loss of growing stock, effect on watersheds, effects on recreation and loss of soil value. Taking all of these into account, we could probably safely say that the long and short term economic loss is over one hundred million dollars.

One hundred and sixty-five of the total 185 fires were controlled within the first five-day period. In the "E" class fires, 28 of the 48 fires were controlled within the first five-day period. The lapse time may not be a significant factor, as there was a major weather system change on May 24 and May 25, which created an adverse burning condition.

The total firefighting cost for 1968 is approximately 5.5 million dollars. "E" class fires of the spring period cost nearly four million dollars, or better than seventy percent of the total firefighting expenditure. The aircraft cost is approximately 25 percent of the total cost.

Number of fires prior to May 17	174
Number of fires May 17 to May 25 inclusive	185
Number of fires May 26 to May 31	6

Total to the end of May	365
Number of fires June 1 to December 31	253
Total for 1968	618

# A.F.S. FIRELINE ORGANIZATION

Following the 1968 fire season, work began to create an organizational structure for use on wildfires, especially the large multi-day wildfires. The Alberta Forest Service Fireline Organization is based upon an operationally tested span of control (organizational basis) which in turn dictates the organizational buildup of five


separate stages. The Fireline Organization is composed of four functions, which are further delineated into sections, where necessary. Job positions are identified by job titles, and further described by qualification requirements, organizational procedures (span of control), general responsibilities and specific duties.

## The Alberta Forest Service Fireline Organization is based on the following premises:

1. A basic squad shall consist of seven firefighters and one Straw Boss, while a basic crew shall be composed of twenty-one firefighters, three Straw Bosses and one Crew Boss.
2. No Straw Boss shall supervise more than seven firefighters.
3. No Crew Boss shall supervise more than three Squads.
4. No Sector Boss shall supervise more than three Crews.
5. No Division Boss shall supervise more than three Sectors.
6. No Zone Boss shall supervise more than three Divisions.

## The organizational buildup of the Alberta Forest Service Fireline Organization consists of five separate stages:

I.	Multiple Squad Fire	0-25	Basic personnel
II.	Multiple Crew Fire	26-75	Basic personnel
III.	Multiple Sector Fire	76 – 225	Basic personnel
IV.	Multiple Division Fire	226 – 675	Basic personnel
V.	Multiple Zone Fire	676 – 2,025	Basic personnel



# ANALYSIS OF THE CANADIAN FOREST FIRE WEATHER INDEX FOR THE 1968 LESSER SLAVE LAKE FIRE (VEGA FIRE)

BY M.E. ALEXANDER

*Editors Note: In this paper, Marty Alexander essentially asked the one question, "Had the Canadian Forest Fire Weather Index (CFFWI) system been operating in 1968, what would the codes and indexes have been?" The following is the introduction and select narrative from the paper.*

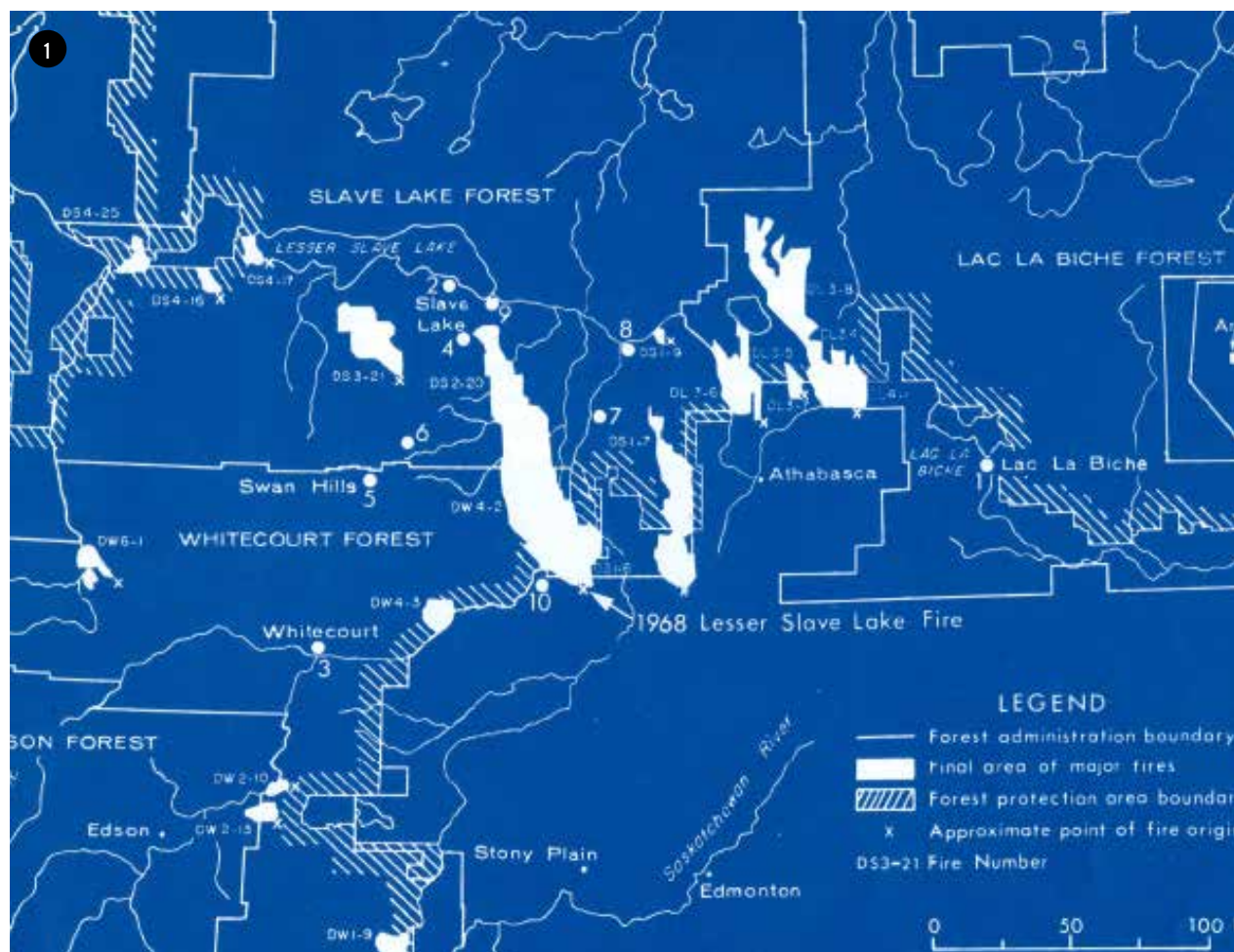
In central Alberta during the last half of May 1968, several man-caused fires occurred accompanied by a critical fire weather pattern that resulted in severe fire behaviour and a correspondingly large burned-over area (McLean and Coulcher 1968). One such fire, commonly termed the Lesser Slave Lake Fire, started on May 19 and eventually covered an area of 133,550 hectares. Nearly one-half of this area burned during the 10 hours between 1300 and 2300 Mountain Daylight Time (MDT) on May 23.

Advancing on a 16- to 24-kilometre front, the fire on that day spread at an average rate of 6.5 km/h through a variety of coniferous and deciduous forest fuel complexes. The transport of firebrands far ahead of the main fire front (and the resulting spot fires) contributed greatly to this unusually high rate of spread. Peak frontal fire intensities were estimated to have exceeded 100,000 kW/m during the major run (Kiil and

Grigel 1969). The firestorm released the energy equivalent to that of a 20 kt bomb exploding every two minutes (one such bomb devastated Hiroshima, Japan, in 1945).

The extreme FWI values resulted from a long run of dry spring weather (increasing BUI) and strong winds combined with low humidity on May 23 (extremely high ISI). How often would one expect to attain or exceed such burning conditions? According to a climatological study of the CFFWI in Alberta, the FWI is unlikely to exceed 80 more than about once every eight fire seasons.

When the CFFWI tables were first published in 1970, the fire behaviour characteristics that were likely to occur at an extreme FWI were envisioned as follows: "rate of spread will be generally fast for extended periods, fire will be extremely hot and there may be extensive crowning and 'long range' spotting ...". Such a description adequately describes



the 1968 Lesser Slave Lake Fire. The CFFWI system would have correctly interpreted the effects of past and current weather on fuel flammability had it been in use then.

Unfortunately, no provision can be made in fire danger forecasting to directly account for special atmospheric conditions that are known to have a profound effect on wildfire behaviour (e.g., airmass instability, low-level jet winds, large-scale subsidence). Fire managers must still rely on the state-of-the-art ability of fire weather forecasters to recognize synoptic-scale weather patterns and upper air characteristics that are conducive to extreme fire behavior.

1. 1968 wildfire map created by Marty Alexander. Location and final area of the Lesser Slave Lake Fire and of other major forest fires in central Alberta during May 1968. Federal and provincial weather stations are numbered from 1 to 10.

2. Canso Pilot Sheldon Luck dropping retardant on one of the Calling Lake wildfires; May 1968



## RECOLLECTIONS FROM BERNIE SIMPSON

Bernie Simpson moved from the Crowsnest Forest in Blairmore to Slave Lake as the Fire Control Officer in 1967. In a 2007 interview, he provided the following on Slave Lake staff and the 1968 wildfires. "We had a good crew in Slave Lake; Neil Gilliat was the Superintendent and Con Dermott was the Forester. Gilliat was an unbelievably good superintendent and a boss, just unbelievable. I think Edmonton didn't appreciate him because he was so innovative. We started things like integrated forest management. He got rangers identifying lakes that had recreation potential, where ski hills were, sensitive rivers, etc. When I first went there, of course, I had some fire background, but we never had major fires down south. For practice, one of the little techniques that Neil introduced me to was "arbitrarily throw a dart at the wall map, and say, okay, you've got a

fire here. How do you respond?" For the first few years, the rangers were in charge of fires in their district, there wasn't a lot of transfer of resources between districts; never mind between forests and now between provinces and countries. It's really changed. District rangers included Bernie Brouwer and Bill Kostiuk in Slave Lake, Bud Sloan in Smith, Glen Sloan in Kinuso, Harry Kostiuk in High Prairie, Phil Nichols at Salt Prairie, Laverne Larson at Red Earth and Howard Morigeau and John Holden at Wabasca. Chuck Ratliff was the forest technician at the time, and we got him really heavily involved in bird-dogging when we started first bringing in the bombers. He was our first Bird Dog Officer. One time he had been out in the government Courier and we'd made a drop with the Mitchell B25 in the Swan Hills, the one that we had to start with a grader. He'd no sooner landed and



there was a report a fire started up at Grouard. With the B25, they could load and be up there in no time, but not with the Courier if there was a west wind blowing. I said, well, Chuck, why don't you just go right in the bomber; and of course, they couldn't shut it off. So, here's this big prop turning and he has to climb up a ladder between these props and sit on something between the two pilots and they went up there and trapped the fire.

I don't know how many fires we had burning at the time. There was just oodles of them. There were so many fires burning we couldn't keep track of them. There was one outside the forest protection area, the Vega fire; it was in a big muskeg area and fires had been burning there for a couple of winters. Anyway, this one day I got in a Cessna 180 at Bayview's with Mel Zachary and I said, you know, we should go down and look at that. We had a few guys down there, and some locals got close to being burned up because they didn't know where they were or where the fire was, and they were running around in a pickup truck and the next thing you knew they were surrounded by fire. I went down there and it was so smoked in, you didn't know what the hell really was happening, but as we got down over the Athabasca River, we watched this fire spotting

across the river. We looked at our watches at it was 12:30 PM, and the fire was heading northwest. All of a sudden, under us a Canso bomber went, just a few hundred feet under us. So Zachary says, let's get the hell out of here; it was really a dangerous situation and we didn't know what other aircraft were in the area. So anyway, we went

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### **"THERE WERE SO MANY FIRES BURNING WE COULDN'T KEEP TRACK OF THEM"**

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and looked at another huge fire in the Smith district. There was also one in Wabasca where they had to evacuate people. Another big fire in the Swan Valley kept threatening the Town of Faust; it would take a new run every day. It was just a nightmare! Anyway, I got back into town and I told Neil. When he asked what it looked like from the air, I said in World War II, Churchill said that we are going to attack Europe in its soft underbelly and, I said, I think we have something coming in our soft underbelly right here! It wasn't terribly long after that that we sent Ratcliff out to see what was

going on. The Town of Slave Lake was smoked in so badly, at four o'clock in the afternoon on May 23, the streetlights came on in town. That's how dark it was, it just went dark. We notified all the Forestry wives, to tell our neighbors to fill everything they could fill with water, because if we lose the power, you're not going to have a hose. All our effort went into trying to protect the town, like hoses along Prairie Creek, and pumps to protect the hospital. Anyway, at 10:30 that night, I don't know whether it was divine intervention or what, but the wind that had blown from the southeast for ten straight days, switched exactly to the northwest and turned the fire back on itself; two miles out of Slave Lake. About four o'clock in the morning Con and I jumped in a Cessna 180 and since we couldn't go to the east side of the fire, we went to the west side, just right out of town. Without a word of a lie, it was like looking down at the joint on this table (interview was in Bernie's kitchen); for miles you could see an absolutely straight line. It went up and over the corner of the Swan Hills and down the other side and you could have just taken a ruler and mapped that thing. I can't remember the exact distance, but it was like about 40 miles in ten hours, and it was ten miles wide. Nick Paulovits, lookoutman at Flat Top, he jumped in



an old van that he had and he roared into town and the damned thing didn't start again. It just started that once, it was unreal.

Then, of course, people from all over heard about how much equipment we needed. They hauled in junk, stuff that had to get towed off the trucks and we were being billed for it, it was a real nightmare. We ended up putting Con as Service Chief. We also had an issue with one grocery store with about thirty thousand worth of bills. When Eddie Johnson went there, he said we've got some questions. The guys tore them up right then. You know, you just had to rely on people. One guy came in there and we put him in charge as camp boss, and it turned out he was a real con man. He would bring in friends with a deepfreeze in the back of their truck and fill it with meat, steaks, and send them back to Edmonton. Too many things going

on, we didn't have the organization we've got today. These fires precipitated our work in developing a fireline organization, and we worked all the next winter with Frank Platt. I was on the committee, with John Morrison, an instructor from the Forestry Training School. We all had job descriptions and an org structure was developed. The next year, we got a big fire up by Peerless Lake, but it was lucky, it was burning towards the lake. It was a serious fire right off the bat, it just exploded. So, I'd just come out with all these books and job descriptions for all these guys. Con was the Fire Boss; Larson was the Line Boss; and a guy named Horst Rhode was the Plans Chief. The structure was easy to set up."

1. Northwest Airlease Mitchell B25 airtanker requiring a pull-start from a grader; Slave Lake air tanker base; May 1968

2. The Flying Fireman Canso airtanker 4 refueling in Edmonton; Pilot Sheldon Luck at the controls; May 1968 wildfires

3. Skyways Aviation TBM Avenger airtankers at the Bayview Air Service hanger; Slave Lake; May 1968

4. Fire Control Officer Bernie Simpson looking at a new 300-gallon monsoon bucket; May 1968 Slave Lake wildfires

# RECOLLECTIONS FROM CON DERMOTT

Con Dermott provided the following on the 1968 fire season. "The '68" fire brought back many memories, as this was a major event early in my career with the Alberta Forest Service. I started the long weekend being dispatched to a fire south of Kinuso to assist Glen Sloan on a man-caused fire that ended up threatening Faust. After a couple days, assisting Glen in organizing this fire with cats and establishing sectors, I mentioned to Glen that it looks like they are getting a thunderstorm to the east, not realizing it was the 1968 Vega fire south of Slave Lake. Shortly after my discussion with Glen, I was dispatched back to Slave Lake. Bernie Simpson, Fire Control Officer, and myself flew the Vega fire at 3 or 4 A.M. to establish locations and establish a map of actual fire. As a point of interest, I could have established a location on the south end of the fire and another one on the north end and used a ruler to develop the edge of the fire, as it was that straight. Bernie had flown the fire that started in Vega area the day before when it jumped the Athabasca River and when we flew the fire early the next day, it was already within two miles of Slave Lake. Speed of this fire spread was unbelievable. I became Service Chief on this fire. Most of the fire action was dozers and direct attack

by manpower. I can remember Harry Edgecombe taking over a zone and providing me a list of where he wanted a sector camp set up, number of dozers, crews, etc. when he arrived. At this time, we had numerous fires in Smith, Kinuso, all man-caused, which people were trying to action and where resources were limited. One of the big events was the hiring of two B25 old warplanes as air tankers, and when one broke down, we started it with the grader using a rope around the end of the propeller as a pull rope. We had just completed a total inventory of all our forest management units (FMU) for the establishment of the Quota System in 1968. The S6 FMU was one of the best units from a timber standpoint and we knew every detail about this unit. Harvesting was completed in this area on a shelter wood basis due to the type of spruce forest, with a 40% removal. All trees were marked and scaled in order to pay timber dues. If the forest was clearcut, volume was established and timber dues paid on our volume of scaled volume. As a point of interest, Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd., a sub-contractor for Swanson Lumber, lost their mill and camp in this fire, and as a result they were awarded one of the salvage permits.

1. Calling Lake firefighters lined up for their commissary order; May 1968 wildfires

2. Lac La Biche Assistant Forest Superintendent Bert Varty (plaid shirt), pointing to a location on map during planning exercise; May 1968 Lac La Biche wildfires. Seated to the back left

is Ranger Harry Jeremy

3. Calling Lake firefighters unloading from a DC3 with Ontario overhead; May 1968 wildfires

4. Lunch break for Calling Lake firefighters; May 1968 wildfires





## RECOLLECTIONS FROM ED PICHOTA

Ed Picota was new to the Alberta Forest Service in 1968 and provided the following. "I was on the timber management crew then and our whole crew was involved in mixing mud for the bombers; Thrushes, Avengers and one B 25. Our party chief Chuck Ratliff was the Bird Dog Officer on the fire. Bernie Simpson was the Fire Control Officer. Our crew was later involved in hauling supplies to crews on the fireline. Bob Lenton, Len Wilton and Lou Foley were young rangers at Slave Lake at that time."



1. L to R: Len Allen, Bill Bereska, Bert Varty (seated) and an Ontario Lands and Forest overhead team member; planning session during the spring 1968, Lac La Biche fires.

2. Skyways Aviation TBM Avenger airtanker 616; Slave Lake airtanker base; May 1968

3. The Flying Fireman Canso tanker 4 refueling in Edmonton; Engineer Dick Cox on the ladder; May 1968 wildfires

4. Calling Lake firefighters moving aviation fuel barrels for Bell 204; May 1968 wildfires

5. Calling Lake firefighters on one of the May 1968 Calling Lake wildfires

6. Staging area for firefighters; May 1968 wildfires

7. Calling Lake firefighter on one of the May 1968 Calling Lake wildfires



## RECOLLECTIONS FROM BILL BERESKA

When asked about the 1968 wildfires, Bill Bereska provided the following. "Yes, I still remember the day when I flew in a Cessna 150 over the start of DL 4-1 (Wandering River fire) and mapped it just as it crossed the Athabasca River. When I dropped the aerial photo sketch of the fire to a waiting Oliver Glanfield in an open field, we waited until he looked at the map, then he got into his truck and took off down the road in a cloud of dust."





1. Bert Varty in the Lac La Biche duty room during the spring 1968 Lac La Biche wildfires. Note assignments on the blackboard for rangers Smith, Graham, Howells, Glanfield, Nuspel and Jeremy.

2. Skyways Aviation TBM Avenger airtanker 17 being loaded with retardant; Slave Lake airtanker base; May 1968

3. Calling Lake firefighters fire camp and tool crib; May 1968 wildfires

4. One of the many wildfires burning in Calling Lake during the 1968 spring fire season

5. The Flying Fireman Canso airtanker 3, Slave Lake; May 1968

6. Bird Dog Piper Aztec CF-KAR being refueled at the Lac La Biche airtanker base; May 1968

# RECOLLECTIONS FROM OLIVER GLANFIELD

In a 2009 interview, Oliver Glanfield provided the following on the 1968 wildfires. "The 1968 fires, they took off from the Grassland area. North of Grassland, there is a whole lot of peat land and the farmers had cleared the land and were burning the debris. The fires, they were burning the top; and as the moss dried, the fires burned back and forth. On the May long weekend, all hell broke loose. The fires took off and went northwest to the mouth of the Lac La Biche River, jumped the Athabasca River, and then hightailed it up to around Calling Lake. I went out with a Beaver aircraft on floats to check the front side of the fires and we just about didn't make it out because the wind was pulling the plane towards the fire. We flew a little too close. We set-up a camp at Wandering River, where we had people and helicopters from all over. My wife worked the radio and took weather readings. When they finally got it under control, we moved the base camp to the mouth of the Lac La Biche River. At one time, we had 500 men down there. They were cooking stew in bathtubs! The firefighters fought the fire all the way up through east of Calling Lake. We had Ontario people supporting us

that year, with firefighters and an overhead team. West of Breynat, along the Athabasca East Road, there used to be big pockets of poplar in there, and those poplar burnt black for at least 20 to 30 feet up. The people from Ontario had never seen that happen before, and said that in Ontario if you got trapped in a fire, the rule was to head for the poplar. They said they'll never do that again. And I'd never seen it before either, the year was very different. We'd had a dry spring with no rain, so that meant frost was still in the muskegs. We could drive a Cat across muskegs. In normal circumstances, it would bog down in the muskeg like a snipe on a saddle blanket, but we drove Cats across it. Once you plowed the fireguard, it then thawed out, and it was a swamp. We had Cats scattered all through the country. We had a small base camp at Earl Smith's ranch, and I was there one night when the fire went on the south side of his fields and you saw absolutely no flame until they were 50 to 75 feet above the trees, and then you'd see the flame. And it was just like the heat from the fire had dehydrated the tree, and the wood turned into gas. It was burning up on top. Old Smith's ranch was saved, it was great to watch."



1. Slave Lake Chief Ranger Len Allen coordinating wildfire resources in Lac La Biche during the May 1968 fires. Under the column *State of Control*, O.C. means *Out of Control*.

# RECOLLECTIONS FROM MIKE POZNIAK

Mike Pozniak ran Cats for Pac Construction during the 1968 wildfires. He recalled "the 1968 Calling Lake fire didn't start at Calling Lake, it is believed to have been started by a farmer near Spruce Valley burning piles. The May long weekend was hot and dry. First, the fire went north towards Wandering River where Oliver Glanfield was the FO II. Oliver had a brand new FO I from the Maritime Ranger School by the name of Leon Graham; what a fire to start a new ranger on. With the high winds, the fire jumped the Athabasca River into DL3 (Calling Lake District) where Dennis Howells and Joe Smith were the rangers. The fire went north then switched to the west and threatened the community of Calling Lake. Every Cat and able-bodied firefighter was actioning the fire to prevent burning the community. At the Calling Lake stopover cabin, east end of the airstrip, Mrs. Pat Uchytel was cooking for the overhead team. The fire made it just shy of the community, going around the south side of the lake. The muskegs and creeks were dry and the Cats could build fireline anywhere. After a

couple of weeks, a few light showers came along to help the situation. The Cats worked both day and night shifts building kilometres of fireline. After about a month, the fire was finally controlled. Later that fall, Mike Artym, owner of three small Cats, started to make parallel lines through the small, burnt brush areas east of the Calling Lake crawl tower (wooden lookout). The Cat would put the blade down, take a layer of duff off, lift the blade, and drive over the pile, then repeat in straight lines. If you look carefully today, you can still see the lines. The idea of this was to expose mineral soil where spruce seeds could fall and germinate. From what I saw in later years, not a lot of spruce started growing in these areas. Those of us operating the Cats came home at the end of the day black from the soot and ash. That winter, there were a lot of permits given out for timber salvage. In the years following, there were a lot of ideas for reforestation of the fire, one of them being the Martinni plows, but that's a whole other story."



2. Calling Lake Ranger Ernie Stroebe inspecting work on a scarification project near the Calling Lake Crawl Tower. Although taken in 1962, this is similar to the equipment and reforestation work as described by Mike Pozniak about Mike Artym.

# THE ALBERTA FOREST SERVICE 1930-2005: PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF ALBERTA'S FORESTS

BY P.J. MURPHY, R.E. STEVENSON, D. QUINTILIO, S. FERDINAND

In May 1968, a blocking high-pressure area developed over Saskatchewan that brought warm, dry air into Alberta along with persistent southeast winds. Windrow burning during the winter months near Rocky Mountain House, Whitecourt, Slave Lake, Athabasca and Lac La Biche resulted in many holdover fires and in the third week of May, strong gusty winds pushed over 30 fires into the protection zone. "The fires established two new records – the greatest number of outbreaks ever recorded so early in the season, and the largest acreage ever incinerated so early in the season. The fires burned over 900,000 acres in total, with timber loss estimated to exceed two billion board feet. One sawmill was destroyed and several timber quotas were severely disrupted. Suppression costs ran over \$5 million. Fortunately, no lives were lost and property loss was not high, although several settled areas had to be evacuated during the peak of the fires." On May 23, the Vega fire, driven by low-level jet winds, burned from the Athabasca River to just south of Lesser Slave Lake in ten hours, a distance of 60 kilometres. "Fire intensity was extreme with spruce trees, 24 inches in diameter, snapped off by the force of fire wind turbulence at peak periods." The fire was influenced by drought conditions, late spring green-up, and a winter with very little snow. Following the run of May 23, however, moisture arrived and saved the Town of Slave Lake from burning. Interestingly, 33 years later on May 23, 2001, the Chisholm fire began, and under very similar conditions, ran towards Lesser Slave Lake. The Chisholm fire slowed just south of the Town of Slave Lake, stalled once again by a cold front arriving with moisture. Both fires were precedent-setting

events in Alberta. As of 2004, the Vega fire spread rate and Chisholm fire intensity values were the highest on record in the province. The impact of the Chisholm fire, however, was significantly greater than the 1968 Vega fire as a result of residential and industrial development in the area over the intervening 33-year period.

As Bob Steele, Director of Forestry, reported: "The many improvements during the year were marred by the worst forest fire year in Alberta's history. Fires destroyed almost one million 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 of central Alberta with unprecedented vengeance. Only a small percentage of the fire-killed timber could be salvaged. This problem further demonstrated the necessity for greater control of settlers' burning practices and a much improved weather forecasting system."

The strong connection between weather and fire behaviour had long been recognized. The problems were first to obtain reliable weather data over the full geographic region, second to try and quantify what the data meant in terms of fire hazard, and then to interpret the data and forecast fire weather and behaviour. The Canadian Forest Service fire research staff had developed tables based on weather readings that gave a "Fire Danger Index" to indicate relative ease of ignition and fire intensity. These were adapted to Alberta in the 1950s. The appointment of W. J. (Jock) McLean as fire weather officer in 1963 was the first major advance in applying weather to fire management. This appointment

was a result of the urgings of Frank Platt. Then, in 1967, McLean recommended that Alberta hire its own meteorologist on an experimental basis to test the idea of a specifically tailored forecast and closer liaison with both the federal weather service and AFS fire control staff through to the firefighter. Meteorologist Ed Stashko was hired to fill this position. Although reaction was positive, tentative plans in 1968 for continuation of such service fell through when operating funds were slashed. Ironically, the spring of 1968 was also the year of the disastrous fires in which more than a million acres burned. This included the Vega fire that spread nearly 40 miles in 10 hours, threatening the Town of Slave Lake. However, the experience highlighted the importance of fire weather forecasting. In 1969, the AFS Fire Weather Office commenced full-time routine operation with Blane Coulcher as permanent meteorologist and Ed Stashko added for the summer.



# THANK YOU

Publication of the February  
2019 Forest History  
Association of Alberta  
Tales & Trails is sponsored  
by the Forest Resource  
Improvement Association  
of Alberta.

# 2018 CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF FORESTRY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The CIF-IFC hosted another successful Conference and Annual General Meeting in Grande Prairie, Alberta September 18 to 20, 2018. Throughout the conference proper, six concurrent sessions and six plenary sessions were hosted, with experts and high-profile speakers weighing in on current forestry research, practices, policies, and innovations to support the conference theme, "Sustaining Resources and Enhancing Communities: By Looking Back and Going Forward". The conference had a great turnout and hosted over 300 delegates, including over 30 students, visiting from all corners of North America and abroad. This year marked the first ever student and young Professional Development Session and Mentorship Program.

The Forest History Association of Alberta had an opportunity to support and host the Forest History session on September 19, 2018. Bruce Mayer facilitated the session featuring three dynamic speakers – Pat Wearmouth, Peter Murphy, and Mark Kuhlberg. As with all

forest history presentations, staying within the allotted 90 minutes was challenging to say the least!

The Forest History Association of Alberta would like to recognize the many volunteers and major award recipients, especially those from Alberta.

#### **Fellow of the Institute:**

Dr. Peter Murphy

#### **Canadian Forestry Scientific**

**Award:** Dr. Mike Flannigan

#### **Schlich Memorial Prize:**

Gillian Stauffer

#### **Tree of Life Awards:**

Milo Mihajlovich and Bruce Mayer

#### **Golden Year Club:**

Keith McClain

#### **Volunteer Awards:**

Dan Wilkinson, Jeff Renton, Vic Lieffers, Marty O'Byrne, Dieter Kuhnke, Fran Hanington, JP Bielech, Julie Steinke, Nathan Lauer, Nicholas Dormaar, Gary Vander Wyst





1. L to R: Peter Murphy, Pat Wearmouth, Bruce Mayer, Mark Kuhlberg; Forest History session presenters; September 19, 2018

2. Alex Drummond (R) presenting Keith McClain with the CIF Golden Year Club award; September 18, 2018

3. Recipients of the CIF Volunteer Awards; Dan Wilkinson in the front; September 18, 2018

4. Alex Drummond (R) presenting Peter Murphy with the CIF Fellow of the Institute Award; September 18, 2018

5. Vic Lieffers (R) presenting Bruce Mayer with the CIF Tree of Life Award; April 24, 2018

6. Vic Lieffers (R) presenting Milo Mihajlovich with the CIF Tree of Life Award; April 24, 2018



*The 2019 CIF-IFC AGM and Conference will be hosted by the CIF-IFC Algonquin Section in Pembroke, Ontario from October 6 to 9, 2019. The conference theme is "River through the Pines: Still Flowing... Still Growing..."*



# NORTHLAND FOREST PRODUCTS PLANTS 30 MILLION SEEDLINGS

BY HOWIE EWASHKO

Northland Forest Products started like most small businesses. Roy and Bev Ewashko saw opportunity in salvaging timber on the Great Canadian Oil Sands site. The partners moved the whole family to Fort McMurray in 1971 to take advantage of that opportunity, striking up a deal to supply timbers to the mine in Uranium City. At this time, the mill was close to where Suncor's base mine is today; it was mobile and powered by a tractor PTO. As all entrepreneurs do, Roy and Bev decided it was time to grow or buy more timber. Slowly they were able to purchase timber from others

in the area, while keeping busy salvaging for the continued growth of Fort McMurray. As I remember, the mill was in the Gregoire area to salvage in front of the building of the living area as well as the industrial district. It was then moved to the CBC tower area just north of Parsons Creek to salvage for the Timberlea, Confederation living areas.

In 1975, the first stationary mill was built where Burnco sits today. Timber quotas had been purchased ensuring a consistent wood supply and sales were good. After a fire at the mill, a new mill was constructed

and production started around 1981 where the mill sits today. Kilns were added to dry the lumber in 1986 and Northland started to plan and sell kiln dried finished lumber into the Canadian and US markets. At this time we paid the government of Alberta to plant seedlings on our behalf. Those years were not counted in our total seedlings planted.

As the years passed by, Northland continued to look for opportunities to move to best practices in all of our business areas. One of these was the purchase of the first HewSaw in Canada. The HewSaw



was purchased to handle the small wood component of our harvest and increase lumber from each log. This commitment to continual improvement and to finding the best way for Northland to operate is a pillar of our business ideology today. We do things a little differently which helps us differentiate ourselves from other producers and it has created markets that we have developed over many years.

We also used this custom approach in our silviculture prescription that has been tested and refined. Over many years, we celebrated our first five, ten, and 15 million seedlings planted quietly, but it was always a source of great pride for Roy, Bev, Craig, Kim and myself to see the land growing with trees again. Our goal was always to ensure the forests are growing for the future and to sustain our operation. In 1996, we again faced a huge setback losing the entire sawmill to a fire. It was time to reassess our commitment to running a sawmill. After some tough discussion, reassurance and help from our partners in business we went ahead and rebuilt. We worked closely with customers, friends and suppliers to help us

build what was a state of the art mill, opening in 1997. In 2008, Northland finished construction of a heat plant on site. This allowed us to focus our attention on the opportunities that the new products presented – the hog fuel or bark is used to provide heat throughout the site; shavings are bagged and sold to customers all over North America; and sawdust is sold to the oil industry as an environmental absorbent. Today 100 percent of the log is utilized. This was the goal with the building of the heat plant and it has materialized. As you are aware oilsands expansion has taken up a lot of productive forest land or land that grows trees. For the years prior to 2016 we had been discussing this with the government and trying to work through solutions. In 2016, a great opportunity presented itself when the sawmill at Boyle came up for sale. We again leveraged our business partners and were able to purchase the mill and timber from the Boyle operation. This gave us a sustainable wood supply to run our mill.

It was all looking good until that day in May 2016 when the Beast (Horse River Fort McMurray wildfire) ignited.

1. Bruce Mayer presenting plaque to the Ewashko family; L to R: Howie Ewashko, Bruce Mayer, Craig Ewashko, Kim Norris and Bev Ewashko; August 31, 2018

2. L to R: Bernie Schmitte, Keith Windeler, Robert Stronach and Lorne Carson; August 31, 2018

Fort McMurray was evacuated but a small group of our employees and our families gathered at the mill. The first night we had other individuals and families gathered at the mill prior to figuring out how to leave as the highway was closed. In time, six of us were left at the mill; Dave, Jeff, Barb, Craig, Jordan and myself. We were lucky that both our logging contractors were in contact with us and offered to help. It was brought to our attention that we had a fire truck in Boyle and it was loaded and brought to the mill. Dave, Jeff and Craig worked at finding additional fire protection. Jordan was our water truck driver and Barb went back and forth to Edmonton and cooked for the crew. Everyday brought different challenges. Our logging contractors provided support and manpower to tackle the Beast. Jason Bobocell and Derek Tchir provided equipment, expertise and moral

## Northland Forest Products Plants 30 million seeds



1. Plaque presented to the Ewashko family; August 31, 2018

2. Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Mayor Don Scott congratulating Northland Forest Products on planting their 30 millionth tree; Fort McMurray; August 31, 2018

support as we battled the Beast. Not every day was bad, but one day will be remembered in my mind as the worst and was the only day we loaded our wallets into our vehicles. It was the day after the Beast moved about 30 kilometres and burnt the camp near Syncrude. That night it came to the west side of the hill along the Athabasca River. It stalled, but carried flames that were 300 feet high and it looked like sunset at 8 PM. In the morning, Jeff and I took a trip up the hill to see what was happening. The fire was creeping along the ground and it looked like things were going to calm down. Boy were we wrong! By noon, the fire was in the treetops and jumping the highway and coming at the mill site from the south. We set up the fire truck to stop the fire coming onto the mill site. With little training, but with help from helicopters and a cat group we were able to stop the fire at the south end from wicking down the riverside of the mill property and taking out all of our log inventory, the mill itself, and planer. Integral to all our efforts was the help and information that was given to us

by the Alberta government. This was passed along to us through Bernie Schmitte. He had our back and kept us informed as to what

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**THE FIRE WAS  
CREEPING ALONG  
THE GROUND AND IT  
LOOKED LIKE THINGS  
WERE GOING TO CALM  
DOWN. BOY WERE  
WE WRONG!**

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and how the fire was moving and what the forecasted movement was. Bernie set the cat groups up at the mill along with firefighters that helped us set up sprinkler systems giving us some rest as the days were stretching to 24 hours. There were also many others from various government departments that were critical in providing information and additional resources that we were unable to thank. Once the fire settled and people were able

to come back to Fort McMurray we wanted to get producing as soon as possible. The mill upgrades continued with new cut-offs and a new HewSaw installed in the year after the fire. We continued to look for ways to add value to our products with innovation and changes to our product suite.

Today we are here to celebrate the planting of our 30 million trees in the Fort McMurray area. Many people have helped us achieve this milestone. From fantastic employees to great contractors. We would not be able to celebrate this milestone without their dedication, hard work and innovative approaches. Partnerships with the forest service, Alberta Pacific, the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo and various other industry members and service providers have facilitated our continued growth and success. This really is an opportunity for us to thank all of our business associates, friends and employees for helping us reach this milestone so thank you all for your support and effort to make Northlands successful.



# ALBERTA-PACIFIC FOREST INDUSTRIES CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

BY PAIGE LAWSON

Twenty-five years ago, the Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc. greenfield mill began producing bright white pulp fibre for the papermakers of the world. Better known as “Al-Pac”, it was one of those projects often described as “biggest”, “newest” and “fastest”. Much has been made of the technology that allowed Alberta-Pacific to live up to those billings, but anyone who has worked for, or with, the company knows the real secret to its success – the people. By recruiting some of the finest people in the business, then building training programs for locals and developing a climate

that encouraged continuous education, innovation and creativity, Alberta-Pacific became the successful business it is today.

On December 1988, Premier Getty formally announced the approval of what would be Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc. Construction was scheduled to start by the fall of 1989, and start-up was predicted in June 1991. Three trusted Crestbrook employees – Pulp Mill Manager Jerry Fenner, Engineering Manager Ted Jackson, and Woodlands Manager Bob Rualt, joined by more than a dozen consultants and other Crestbrook employees, immediately began preparing a 1,200-page

environmental impact assessment. Two months later, on the eve of a provincial election, Environment Minister Ian Reid announced that an independent panel would review Al-Pac’s environmental assessment and conduct public hearings – a major change from the previous procedure. In the Athabasca riding, newly elected Progressive Conservative Member of the Legislative Assembly, Mike Cardinal, was a strong supporter of the Alberta-Pacific project and saw it as a vital economic stimulus that would bring new opportunities to the community. To outsiders, the transformation in the mill’s proposal appeared to occur



overnight, but in fact, between the initial project proposal in 1988 and formal government approval in 1991, Alberta-Pacific weathered an unprecedented storm of political and environmental controversy. A federal-provincial review board spent nearly a year scrutinizing the anticipated environmental impacts. Looking back, however, the project leaders say the process allowed them to anticipate and address many of the problems that might have arisen otherwise. Ruault, like many progressive foresters, had been envisioning a new approach to forest management for a long time, and Alberta-Pacific provided both the opportunity and the necessity to put the concept into practice on a large scale. This was assisted with the hiring of Dr. Daryl Hebert, a professional biologist, who worked

with Woodlands team members including Ken Plourde, Conn Brown, Doug Sklar and Ed Lefebvre.

Directors representing the three Alberta-Pacific partners – Crestbrook, Mitsubishi and Kazaki – met in Edmonton on April 24, 1991, and gave formal approval to begin construction. Since September 1, 1993, the mill has filled thousands of rail cars with millions of bales of bleached kraft pulp. The \$1.3-billion industrial complex had one of the fastest, smoothest start-ups of any pulp mill anywhere. Sound engineering, and incorporating the latest technologies, created a truly world-class facility on the edge of Alberta's vast boreal forest.

Alberta-Pacific has demonstrated a continuing commitment to create opportunities for Aboriginal people,

and to respect and learn from their cultural values. The company has formed numerous partnerships with local businesses and communities, and found new ways to cooperate with northeastern Alberta's other land users such as the energy sector.

Since beginning operations, Alberta-Pacific has prided itself on being a world leader for its forest management practices as well as its economic and social contributions. These efforts were validated in September 2005, when the company achieved Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) certification. The current certification of 5.9 million hectares (14.5 million acres) of Al-Pac's Forest Management Agreement (FMA) area represents the largest FSC-certified forest in the world.



In addition to being a world leader in kraft pulp production, Al-Pac also produces renewable energy from forest biomass to power our millsite as well as supply this power to Alberta's grid – enough to power 22,000 homes/year.

With innovation at its core, Al-Pac is continually investing in new opportunities to diversify its business including developing North America's first bio-methanol plant, and the development of cellulose-nanocrystals production in Alberta. Al-Pac believes sustainable forest management is a pillar of the Canadian economy, but it requires leadership, vision, and the ability to adapt to, and invest in change.

Previous Page: Tour of Alberta Pacific Forest Industries mill construction; 1992

1. Tour of Alberta Pacific Forest Industries site; crane construction; 1992
2. Alberta Pacific Forest Industries mill, north of Grassland, Alberta
3. L to R: Bob Ruault, Wayne Staudt, Ed Taylor, Jim Stevens, George Jackson, Ted Jackson, Jerry Fenner; Sitting: Stuart Lang; Core executive group charged with making the Alberta-Pacific project a success; early 1990s
4. L to R: Brent Rabik, Business Development and Government Affairs; Dale Bencharsky, President and CEO; Cal Dakin, Woodlands Manager; Alpac 25<sup>th</sup> celebration; November 21, 2018
5. L to R: Masayasu (Mike) Inoue, Bill Hunter, Jerry Fenner, Wayne Staudt, Masatoshi (Mark) Kawakami, Fumikazu (Fumi) Matsuura; Sitting: Shukuro Ishikawa
6. Agriculture and Forestry Minister Oneil Carlier presenting 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary plaque to Dale Bencharsky



The NAIT Forest Technology School graduating class of 1968 held its very successful 50th reunion from August 14 to 16, 2018. We met at the Prairie Creek Inn on the west bank of Prairie Creek, 17 kilometres south of Rocky Mountain House. Out of a class of 35 graduates, 14 of us attended; including Floyd Adlem from the Northwest Territories, Walt Hochachka from Prince George, B.C., and Brian Aaberg from Chemainus, B.C. The rest of us were from Alberta. Peter Murphy, our last instructor and director at the school, could not make it, but did send a nice tribute for the class. Peter was instrumental in assembling a very professional and strong group of instructors who started us off on long and rewarding careers. These instructors included George Ontkean, Dick Hillson, Joe Richert, Paul Hartmann and John Tewnton in first year; and John Wagar, Stan Lockard, Dick Altmann, Jack Macnab, Harry Edgecombe, Al Walker and John Benson in second year. Nine of our class have since passed on, and were only able to be part of our reunion in our hearts and minds. They are Gerald Arychuk, Dave Fournier, Bob Gordon, Jim McDermid, Ken Mulak, Harvey Rickert, Bob Roswell, Randy Steiner and Bob Webb. Several others were not able to attend. The reunion included re-lived memories, stories not previously heard (and some repeated), and a lot of plain and simple B.S. In January 2019, Dave Fauville passed away.

Our very first reunion (17th year) was held in 1985 at the Wild Hay Group Camp, northwest of Hinton, on the edge of Wilmore Wilderness Park. I was in charge of a large recreational development program in the Edson Forest with the Alberta Forest Service at the time, and with the Wild Hay campground upgrades, we felt this was an ideal spot for our first reunion. Premier Peter Lougheed held a team meeting discussing the future of the Wilmore Wilderness Park following our reunion. Since then, we have held reunions in 1988, 1991, 1993, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013, and our 50th this year, 2018. A focal point of all our reunions is a large campfire, which often lasts into the wee hours of the morning. A second day banquet is also a regular occurrence. Horseshoes, bocce ball and a wind-up golf tournament are part of the activities. During our 25th reunion, baseball was on the agenda! Bob and Patty Webb kept a photo album on all the reunions, and Patty has graciously donated this album to our care. As a result, we have a very well documented account of all of our reunions up to Bob's passing. From that day, Bruce Wakeford, who organized the 40th and myself, who organized the 45th and 50th reunions, have a good record of photographs from those reunions.

Our 53rd reunion is already being planned for August 2021, again at the Prairie Creek Inn.



1. Forest Technology School sign;  
Hinton, Alberta; early 1960s

2. Winter camp tent frames; Cache  
Percotte Forest; 1966

3. Campfire construction during  
winter camp; Cache Percotte Forest;  
1966 (Brydon Ward front row, second  
from the right)

4. Back Row (L to R): Harold Evenson,  
Tony Wispinski, Don Law, Randy  
Steiner, Ian Brace, Norm Olsen,  
Bryan Allan, Brydon Ward, Kelly  
O'Shea; Middle (L to R): Ken South  
behind Walter Hochachka and  
Harvey Rickert; Front Row (L to R):  
Morris Walters, Walt Hochachka,  
Conn Brown, Bob Gordon, Ed Pichota,  
Morley Christie; first reunion of the  
1968 NAIT Forestry Class; 1985



*Although Peter Murphy was unable to attend the 1968 NAIT Forest Technology School graduating class reunion, he did provide the following summary. "The Prairie Creek Inn is a great choice of location. I wonder if this is the site of the operation started by Larry and Claire Kennedy in the 1960s. The Prairie Creek Inn looks like it is close by, if not the same. Larry Kennedy was raised in Rocky Mountain House. His father was a logger and sawmiller, so it was natural that he took forestry at UBC and became the first real full-time silviculturist for the Alberta Forest Service. He started the cone collection program, raised seedlings at the then Oliver Tree Nursery and supervised the first major seedling plantings. He and Claire were keen cross-country skiers, and decided to start their own business based on those outdoor activities. They bought the land with an old house and a few cabins and started modestly with weekend guests. They had rooms in their big house and a few cabins, cut trails and built shelters, later adding more cabins and a major log building that they designed and built themselves, with help. We visited often as a family for fall hiking and winter skiing. They later moved to the BC coast when health concerns arose, but left a nice legacy. This is a long story, but wanted to give you some background, whether or not this is their old property, the Prairie Creek Inn is in a historical setting with a 'forestry' influence.*

*Yours has been a notable class, not only at the schools, NAIT and the Forest Technology School, but in your individual contributions to forestry in its broadest sense. I am sure that each of you takes satisfaction in your individual careers, and should feel good about your collective achievements. I have enjoyed your previous anniversary sessions, both in person and vicariously. Your announcements have always drawn me back to your yearbook to refresh memories of you as individuals and as a class. It also reminds me about the instructors at both institutions; we got lucky in their availability and enthusiastic support of the program. I seem to be among the last of them standing, perhaps the last, but they are all alive in my memories. It was great to be able to work with them and to share with them the trials and successes as we went along. It seems strange in retrospect that your Yearbook did not include the NAIT team who felt as keenly about you as we did at Hinton. As I recall, they included George Ontkian, Joe Rickert, Dick Hillson, Paul Hartmann and John Tewnion – a pretty talented and committed group! At Hinton were John Wagar, Dick Altmann, Stan Lockard, John Benson, Harry Edgcombe, Jack Macnab and Al Walker. What a bunch! And, all of us with our individual interests and quirks of personality. What a hoot to be able to work with you and, I know, we all enjoyed sharing our knowledge and skills with you. As staff, collectively, we savoured our own memories and stories of tribulations in the same light-hearted spirit of recollection as you do from the receiving end. And, at the end, "we done good!" Nice going – to all of you."*

1. Back Row (L to R): Randy Steiner, Bob Webb, Harold Evenson, Ed Pichota, Conn Brown, Don Law, Dennis Anderson; Front Row (L to R): Ken South, Kelly O'Shea, Morley Christie, Brydon Ward, Bryan Allan; 1968 NAIT Forestry Class 25<sup>th</sup> reunion; 1993

2. Reunion artwork from Bob and Patty Webb

3. Back Row (L to R): Audrey O'Shea, Janet South, Jean Ann Steiner, Sue Ward, Margaret Brown, Grace Anderson, Patti Webb; Front Row (L to R): Janice Pichota, Lynda Allan, Donna Law, Susan Christie, Joan Evanson; wives at the 1968 NAIT Forestry Class 25<sup>th</sup> reunion; 1993

4. Standing (L to R): Dick Hillson, Ken South, Gerald Arychuk, Harold Evenson, Dave Fournier, Rick Bambrick, Bryan Allen, Ryerson Christie, Brydon Ward, Kelly O'Shea, Joe Rickert (about to turn 90); Seated (L to R): Brian Aaberg, Larry Lefleur, Walter Hochachka, Bruce Wakeford, Thor Knapp, Conn Brown, Floyd Adlem; 1968 NAIT Forestry Class 40<sup>th</sup> Reunion; 2008

5. Back Row (L to R): Bob Glover (Basic Ranger Course, 1968), Floyd Adlem, Bruce Wakeford, Ed Pichota, Bryan Allan, Rick Bambrick, Brydon Ward, Kelly O'Shea, Harvey Rickert, Walter Hochachka, Gerald Arychuk; Front Row (L to R): Dennis Anderson, Brian Aaberg, Larry Lafleur, Conn Brown, Morley Christie, Harold Evenson; 1968 NAIT Forestry Class 45<sup>th</sup> Reunion; 2013

6. Back Row (L to R): Bruce Wakeford, Ken South, Floyd Adlem, Rick Bambrick, Walter Hochachka, Ed Pichota, Brydon Ward, Don Law (behind Brydon), Bryan Allan, Harold Evenson; Front Row Kneeling (L to R): Brian Aaberg, Larry Lafleur, Conn Brown, Kelly O'Shea; 1968 NAIT Forestry Class 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion; 2018

7. L to R: Brydon Ward and Kelly O'Shea wearing their 1968 NAIT Forest Technology School class jackets; 2018

8. Back Row (L to R): Donna Wakeford, Janet South, Marjorie Hochachka, Sharon Bambrick, Janice Pichota, Agnes Aaberg, Sue Ward, Joan Evenson, Judy Lefleur, Margaret Brown, Audrey O'Shea, Lynda Allan, Donna Law (behind Lynda Allan); 1968 NAIT Forestry Class Ladies 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion; 2018



# SLAVE LAKE ANTHEM

BY MIKE COLLINS

The Slave Lake Anthem is a poem by Mike Collins, a towerman in the Slave Lake Forest, who sent it to Mr. and Mrs. Donald Buck around 1962. Donald Buck was a forest ranger in Slave Lake from 1923 to 1931, later retiring to Victoria, B.C. in 1956. The poem was part of a package sent to Peter Murphy by Frances (Buck) Chapman, from a collection of documents her parents had saved.

## SLAVE LAKE ANTHEM

*Oh, give me a home where the  
Slave River foams*

*And the lake glitters bright in  
the sun;*

*Where people you find, friendly, happy and  
kind,*

*And the year 'round we have lots of fun.*

*Chorus:*

*Home, home in Slave Lake*

*Where the men do the cooking and bake;*

*Where girls like to talk as they court or  
they walk*

*And the horses and cows - goodness sake.*

*Where some like to farm and some like to  
fish*

*And all thrive without hullabaloo;*

*Where they no man do fear and only  
drink beer*

*When there ain't nothing better  
to do.*

*With our brave Board of Trade sure the  
town is just made -*

*There is talk of a brand-new  
pulp mill;*

*Not to mention a bank and a jail of  
first rank*

*And a sky scraper on Rabbit Hill.*

*And if you wait a bit till our councilors sit*

*There will really be progress forthcoming;*

*What with sidewalks galore and  
a posh liquor store,*

*Plus the most up-to--date indoor plumbing.*

*Yes, this is the place where the radar  
was based*

*And the Forestry knows every dodge;*

*For no longer is smoke allowed to run  
amoke,*

*At least not since they hired Percy Hodge.*

*Sammy Sinclair is the Dean of a great  
boxing team*

*At the legion they punch bags with mitts;*

*You do pushups and spar, at ping-pong we  
all star -*

*It's the best deal in town for 2-bits.*

*Guys are up on their toes from the time the  
bell goes;*

*Some are mighty tough, like Henry Houle.*

*They go all out to win, and of course  
Laurence Twin*

*Packs a clout like a kick from a mule.*

*And if you're out of luck, if you don't clinch  
or duck*

*You'll end up with a great big black peeper;*

*This can well be the case when the gloves  
on you lace*

*With Wilf Auger or Charlie Ghostkeeper.*

*Chorus:*

*Home, home in Slave Lake*

*Yes, that boxing club sure takes the cake;*

*Out of town or at home or wherever they  
roam*

*They show courage and skill - no mistake.*

1. The original 1968 sign at the Footner Lake Arboretum; High Level Forest Area; September 29, 2018

2. Michelle Shesterniak with the new sign at the Footner Lake Arboretum; September 29, 2018



1



2

# FOOTNER LAKE ARBORETUM TURNS 50!

BY MICHELLE SHESTERNIAK

High Level Forest Area staff celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Footner Lake Arboretum in September 2018. Due to the passage of time and department reorganizations, many records related to the arboretum were not found; and as such, the following article is based on what information is known and knowledge of staff within forestry.

Forest Superintendent H.R. (Rex) Winn established the Footner Lake Arboretum in 1968, shortly following the creation of the Footner Lake Forest. In 1966, the Alberta Forest Service made the decision to divide what was known then as the Peace River Forest into two forests, recognizing the increasing importance of the forests in the very far north part of the province, in the High Level area. The new forest was named Footner Lake, from the local lake situated just north of High Level, Alberta.

Footner Lake itself was named after Hulburt Footner, a Canadian journalist and author, who explored the upper Peace River country in 1906. He returned to Alberta in 1909, and with a companion explored the mouth of the Hay River in the Northwest Territories.

During the early days, the forest was viewed as a source of trees for products and economic development, with the main focus being improved coniferous timber production. This is reflected in the motto for the arboretum "Better Wood for the Future". The original species planted in the arboretum were Douglas Fir, Siberian Larch and non-native pine and spruce, such as Scots pine and Norway Spruce. The planting of these species was to determine if any of the most popular timber species from other areas would do well in northern climates. As forestry evolved to include other forest values, the arboretum also evolved.

## Footner Lake Arboretum Turns 50!

During the late 1980's or early 1990's, then forest superintendent Jordan Johnston introduced non-timber species including Russian Olive, Honeysuckle and Hawthorn. Over the years, additional species were added. Today, there are 24 species including firs, spruces, pines, larches, lindens, elms, honeysuckle and hawthorn. Of special note are the Silver Maple and the Rocky Mountain Juniper.

In the last few years, there has been renewed interest in the arboretum and its potential value for education and public enjoyment. Realizing that 2018 was the 50th anniversary of the arboretum, the staff of the High Level Forest Area planned a major renovation project. A new entrance sign was commissioned, retaining the information from the original 1968 sign. A new entrance gateway and sign posts were installed using local tamarack, generously donated by La Crete Sawmills. Agriculture and Forestry staff, including summer students, patrolmen, Junior Forest Rangers, a Firetack crew, and several Helitack crew members did all of the work of peeling logs, building a gravel pathway, installing posts, hanging the sign, pruning and thinning. All the staff did a great job on a project that required creativity, ingenuity and lots of hard work.

A public bar-b-que was held on September 29, 2018 to celebrate the anniversary. Of the approximately 40 people who attended, some of them had not even realized that the arboretum was there. Most were impressed and considered visiting again in the summer when all the trees would be leafed out.

Future plans are to add additional information, especially for some of the native species that form the ground cover and to include traditional uses of the plants. The arboretum is located between Pierre's Pond, which is stocked with Rainbow Trout and has a picnic area, and the Northern Lights Forest Education Society walking trails along Footner Lake. A relaxing, informative nature tour could easily encompass all three sites.

The arboretum is one of those projects that has been affected by changing priorities and departmental reorganizations over the years. By partnering with the Northern Lights Forest Education Society, it is anticipated that the arboretum can be better maintained and enjoyed more often by students and the public.





# PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE CANADIAN FORESTRY CORPS

BY DEREK NIGHBOR

On November 11, Canadians will pay tribute to the men and women who have served our country during times of conflict and honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice in order for all of us to enjoy the freedoms we have today. What many people may not be aware of is the story of the Canadian Forestry Corps, which made a significant contribution to Allied efforts during the First and Second World Wars – but one which is often overlooked.

The Forestry Corps was created during the First World War when it was discovered that huge quantities of wood were needed on the Western Front. The forest

products industry was a dominating economic force in Canada's early history and the British Government quickly discovered there was nobody more experienced or qualified to harvest timber than Canadians. In 1916, British Colonial Secretary, Andrew Bonar Law, made a request of the Governor General of Canada to deploy Canadian lumbermen to aid in the cutting and processing of timber. Later that year, the Canadian Forestry Corps was created.

At the time, Canada shipped processed timber across the Atlantic to Britain. However, due to the high risk of travelling overseas from German U-boats, it was deemed

1. L to R: Michelle Shesterniak and Darren Tapp amongst the trees at the Footner Lake Arboretum; November 29, 2018

2. Barbeque celebration with Terry Jessiman cooking; Footner Lake Arboretum anniversary; September 29, 2018

3. Bushman and Sawmill Hands Wanted; 1945



1. The Pulp and Paper Industry of Canada 'War Magic' advertisement; 1945

2. Dr. Marty Alexander holding his Ember Award, Missoula, Montana, May 23, 2018. Photo by Steve Miller

safer to bring the manpower to work in the forests of Britain and continental Europe. Approximately 24,000 men served as part of the Forestry Corps in various parts of Europe, producing lumber for barracks, trenches, bridges and railway beds – to build crates for food and ammunition – and sadly, to construct coffins. By the end of the war, the Corps had produced approximately 85,000 tonnes of round timber, 260 million board feet of lumber, and over 200,000 tons of fuel and slabs.

Besides producing lumber, the Corps was also trained as infantry and occasionally served on the front lines to assist in the quick construction of rail and road systems in the wake of attacking troops. On one occasion, when a request was made for 500 men to join infantry duty, records show that almost 1,300 volunteered. By the time the offensive had been halted, a large number of Corps members had served in some capacity on the front lines.

When the Corps was disbanded in 1920 shortly after the end of the war, it is estimated they were responsible for 70 percent of all lumber that had been used by Allied forces.

In 1940, the Canadian Forestry Corps was re-established in response to the start of WWII to play the same role. Once again, thousands of volunteers came forward, many of them veterans of the First World War. Thirty companies were drawn from all regions of Canada including Quebec. Altogether about 7,000 men were deployed to Scotland.

As we mark Remembrance Day, let's pause and honour the many contributions and the ultimate sacrifice made by so many – and have touched the lives of all Canadians, regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, or social class. The Canadian Forestry Corps was made up of men who went from the back bushes of rural Canada to the front lines of war – and to all of them and their families and loved ones, we owe a debt of gratitude.

To learn more about the Canadian Forestry Corps you can visit these resources:

Canadian Forestry Corps, [canadiansoldiers.com](http://www.canadiansoldiers.com/corpsbranches/forestrycorps.htm): <http://www.canadiansoldiers.com/corpsbranches/forestrycorps.htm>

Units of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, Canadian Forestry Corps, Library and Archives of Canada: <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/005/f2/005-1142.29.010-e.pdf>



# ALEXANDER RECEIVES EMBER AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN WILDLAND FIRE SCIENCE

Dr. Marty Alexander, formerly a senior fire behavior research officer with the Canadian Forest Service (1976-2010) received the Ember Award from the International Association of Wildland Fire (IAWF) at a ceremony held in Missoula, Montana, on May 23, 2018. The Ember Award has been bestowed on six previous recipients since 2006, including two previous Canadians -- Charlie Van Wagner in 2012 and Brian Stocks in 2017.

The purpose of the IAWF Ember Award is to recognize sustained excellence in wildland fire research and to encourage innovation, exploration, application, and dissemination of important research results.

Marty had previously received the International Wildland Fire Safety Award from the IAWF in 2003.

In semi-retirement, Marty has continued to stay active in the field of wildland fire science, with a particular emphasis on the application of fire behavior knowledge to ensuring the safety of firefighters and members of the public from wildfires.

## HOT OFF THE PRESS

# LEARNING FROM THE LANDSCAPE, THE fRI RESEARCH STORY

BY ROBERT D. BOTT AND ROBERT W. UDELL

*As a teaser for the recently released Learning from the Landscape, The fRI Research Story; Chapter Eight, CCFM Criterion Six, Society's Responsibility has a historical context section on Knowledge Exchange and Informed Decision Making (Pages 263 to 266) that have been included in this edition of Trails and Tales with permission of the authors.*

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In 1900, a group of influential citizens from government and industry established the Canadian Forestry Association (CFA)<sup>i</sup>, the nation's first and oldest conservation organization. Though emphasis has varied, it has continued to pursue the founding objectives:

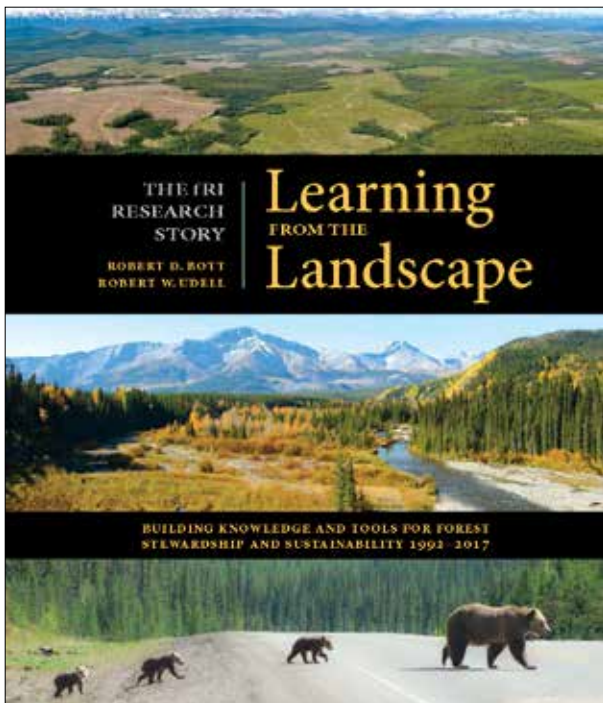
- Advocate and encourage judicious methods in dealing with Canada's forests
- Awaken public interest in the dangers resulting from undue destruction of timber along rivers and streams
- Consider and recommend improvements regarding the development of forested public lands
- Promote tree planting in treeless areas, along streets, and in parks of villages, towns, and cities
- Collect and disseminate information on forestry issues for the benefit of the Canadian public

One notable project of the CFA from 1919 to 1973 was the Tree Planting Car, a joint project with the two national railways. The "travelling schoolhouse" criss-crossed the Prairies each summer, teaching farmers and townspeople to plant shelterbelts, fruit trees, and ornamentals. Its lecturers also gave educational presentations for schoolchildren. After 1933, it doubled as the Conservation Car and also toured parkland areas to promote the wise use of all renewable resources, including forests and trees. The railcar hosted more than 1.5 million visitors and travelled more than 400,000 kilometres<sup>ii</sup>. Greg and Gladys Stevens joined this project in 1962 and continued by motor vehicle for another 10 years after the railway car was retired.

"For 21 years, Greg, as Smokey the Bear, and Gladys, as Bertie Beaver, travelled across the prairies speaking to more than 600,000 children, teachers, parents, and other adults about conservation, the forest, and the need for its protection. Driving a truck, hauling a trailer, or being hauled in a forestry conservation railway car over thousands of miles of rail or pavement, gravel, mud, and streams, they survived many highway hazards, flipping over once, and three train wrecks. He [Greg] received numerous awards, including the Alberta Achievement Award, the Alberta Teachers Association Environmental and Outdoor Education Merit Award, the Calgary Board of Education Lamp of Learning Award, and was the first Western Canadian to receive the Tourism Industry Association of Canada Governor General's Conservation Award in 1983."

– Obituary of Greg Stevens,  
*Winnipeg Free Press*, November 14, 2001<sup>iii</sup>

Other CFA initiatives have included sponsoring forestry conferences, National Forestry Week, tree-planting programs, Envirothon<sup>1</sup> competitions, and Forest Capital of Canada events in various locations. The association published *The Canadian Forestry Journal* until 1959, and since 2000, it has produced the Canada's Forests



Teaching Kit Series. In 1986, the provincial affiliate, the Alberta Forestry Association, published *Alberta Trees of Renown: An Honour Roll of Alberta Trees*.<sup>iv</sup>

The CFA's professional counterpart, the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF), was founded in 1908, one year after the University of Toronto established Canada's first Faculty of Forestry<sup>2</sup>. The institute's journal, *The Forestry Chronicle*, began publication in 1925 and continues to provide a major means of peer-to-peer communication about policy issues, scientific research, and best practices in Canada. CIF conferences and regional section meetings provide forums for knowledge exchange among professional foresters in industry, academia, government, and non-government organizations. Since 2011, the CIF and CFA have pooled resources to develop and deliver educational programs and services.

From 1948 to 1973, the federal-provincial Eastern Rockies Forest Conservation Board undertook public education in the foothills region regarding wildfire risks, forestry, land use, water resources, and erosion. From 1958 to 1971, the provincial Department of Lands and Forests published a bimonthly magazine called *Land-Forest-Wildlife* (*Land-Forests-Parks-Wildlife* after 1967). W.H. (Bill) MacDonald, the department's "publicity officer," edited the magazine for nine years and also published booklets on specific topics such as fishing<sup>v</sup>. Various short-lived publications followed, but there were few government or non-government conservation publications of similar scope for general audiences until the Alberta Conservation Association launched the semi-annual *Conservation* magazine in 2003.

- 1 *Envirothon* is an environmentally themed competition for high school students in Canada and the United States. The annual competition includes problem-solving presentations and written field tests. Winning provincial and state teams go on to a bi-national competition. The U.S. sponsor is the National Conservation Foundation. The competition dates back to a 1979 Environmental Olympics in Pennsylvania, and Canadian provinces became involved in 1992. Topics include environmental ecology, forestry, soils, land use, and wildlife.
- 2 Canada's other faculties of forestry are at the University of New Brunswick (established 1908), Laval University (1912), University of British Columbia (1921), University of Alberta (1970), Lakehead University (1971), University of Moncton (1985), and University of Northern British Columbia (1993).
- 3 The Junior Forest Wardens originated in British Columbia in 1930, where they were initially called Junior Forest Fire Wardens. The outdoor-oriented program, for youth aged 6 to 18, was administered by the provincial government in Alberta from 1961 to 2007. The national and provincial organizations continue today.
- 4 Michael Voisin left the AFPA in 1994 to become director of communications for Weldwood Canada at the corporate head office in Vancouver. In that position, until 1998, he continued to play an active role in communications for the company's Hinton operation, the model forest, and the Alberta forest industry. After a stint in Ontario, he returned to Alberta in 2003 as director of business and public affairs for Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries. He retired in 2015.

At Hinton, one of the first employees of North Western Pulp & Power in 1955 was former forest ranger Robin Huth, who soon moved from timber cruising to managing public relations and later industrial relations. Huth joined the Hinton Chamber of Commerce and became president of the Home and School Association. He and the company's chief forester, Des Crossley, established the first Alberta chapter of the Junior Forest Wardens<sup>3</sup> to involve young people in forestry. Until he left the company in 1964, Huth wrote regular columns for the *Hinton Herald* newspaper<sup>vi</sup>. He later wrote *Horses to Helicopters: Stories of the Alberta Forest Service*, published in 1980, and a memoir, *Outdoor Junkie*, published in 2006.

Crossley and other company foresters such as Jack Wright and Jim Clark were active in the Rocky Mountain Section of the CIF, and Crossley also served as national CIF president in 1966–1967. They advocated for creation of the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Alberta in 1970 and the establishment of the Forest Industry Lecture Series there in 1976–1977. Crossley produced more than 40 publications in his career, including an invited paper, "Application of Scientific Discoveries and Modern Technologies in Silviculture," for the Sixth World Forestry Congress in Madrid in 1966 and his major paper for the Alberta Forestry Association, "Toward a Vitalization of Canadian Forests," in 1985. He also served at various times on the Senate of the University of Alberta, the regional advisory board of the Canadian Forest Service, the advisory committee of the provincial Environmental Conservation Authority, the

federal Arctic Land Use Research Advisory Council, and the Alberta Forest Service Research Advisory Council.

In 1986, the Government of Alberta embarked on an ambitious program to expand and modernize the province's forest industry. This effort was led from 1986 to 1993 by Al Brennan as executive director of a new Forest Industry Development Division in the Department of Forestry, Lands, and Wildlife (Department of Environmental Protection after 1992). Brennan's division produced publications, speeches, and presentations to inform the public and investors about the potential opportunities in Alberta's forest resources. The effort succeeded, but the new mills and forest management agreements (FMAs) also attracted unprecedented levels of attention and controversy.

Directors of the Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA) recognized by 1990 that they could not rely solely on government public relations to assure the public about the industry's sustainability. The AFPA recruited Michael Voisin<sup>4</sup>, who had faced somewhat similar challenges while working in the Ontario chemical industry, to become the association's director of communications. Voisin's experience and advocacy helped

AFPA member companies to develop the ForestCARE Codes of Practice, a monitoring and improvement program backed by third-party certification. Soon after Voisin's arrival, the AFPA also partnered with the Friends of Environmental Education Society of Alberta (FEESA) to produce educational materials and programs. At the same time, the association commissioned Robert Bott to write a 64-page educational booklet on the Alberta forest industry, *Our Growing Resource*, published in 1992.

In January 1991, the Rocky Mountain Section of CIF held a technical session in Calgary on the "Forestry-Media Relationship" to address the profession's public image. Two journalists and an academic told about 70 attendees that foresters needed "intelligent responses" to "help media separate fact from fiction." Voisin outlined the ForestCARE Program, which was then being formulated, and said it would show the public and the media that the forest companies were "responsible and good corporate citizens."<sup>vii</sup>

Later in 1991, FEESA tested the concept of 12-day professional development institutes for teachers. With support from government and industry, one institute focused on forestry and the other on water issues. The institutes gave teachers first-hand exposure to industrial operations and introduced them to experts and practitioners from industry, government, academia, and non-government organizations. This approach gained financial backing in 1992 from the Canada-Alberta Partnership Agreement in Forestry, which led to a series of Forestry Education Institutes in 1992, 1993, and 1994. The institute programs included sessions in Hinton with participants from Weldwood and the model forest. Participants included school teachers, administrators, consultants, post-secondary instructors, and educational staff from government and industry. In addition, the Canada-Alberta Partnership provided funding for FEESA to produce three educational videos (two 60-minute and one 45-minute) on forestry-related issues.

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5. FEESA was founded in 1985 by educator Jim Martin (1949–2016) to provide teachers and students with "bias-balanced" knowledge of environmental issues. The organization was known as FEESA, An Environmental Education Society, until 2004, when its name changed to Inside Education. Martin served as executive director until 2005, after which he founded and led the Centre for Environment-Economy Learning. In 2011, he received an Alberta Emerald Award for individual commitment to environmental protection.

# FORESTRY DIVISION MEETING 1961



A three day conference of Forestry Division branch heads, superintendents, assistant superintendents and foresters was held February 1961 in Edmonton. Chaired by E. S. (Eric) Huestis, Director of Forestry, the meetings covered those aspects of administration, protection and management of Alberta's forests.

Fred McDougall saved the article and provided the following historical context. "I think this particular photo was designed for the newspapers in and surrounding the old Peace River Forest, which at the time, covered all of northwest Alberta, including what later became the Footner Lake Forest. My presence was as a member of Larry Gauthier's Peace River management team. Note also that Ray Smuland (Grande Prairie) and Jack MacGregor (Slave Lake) represented neighbouring forests. Eric Huestis, and particularly his executive assistant Lola Cameron, were particularly media smart, and knew how to give the media what they wanted while getting good positive Alberta Forest Service coverage in return. Larry Gauthier was a very good Forest

1. Newsprint article from Thursday, February 16, 1961 on the Alberta Forest Service conference in Edmonton; Peace River Gazette; February 16, 1961

Superintendent. He was in the firm but fair category, with a reputation for being very intense when crossed. He believed in the chain of command, but delegated well and backed up his staff against criticism, particularly if it was political. Rex Winn was a personal friend. We hunted ducks and geese together, and I (a bachelor) was a frequent guest at his home for Sunday dinner, after which we re-organized the Peace River Forest, the Alberta Forest Service, the Alberta Government and John Diefenbaker's policies and politics. Rex was highly regarded by the staff, very knowledgeable, and very good at organization, preparedness, and firefighting. No one ever won an argument with Rex, but at the same time, he knew how to listen and learn. Later on, in the 1970s, Rex did a fabulous job starting up and running the new Pine Ridge Forest Nursery as it's first superintendent. My only direct contact with Senior Superintendent Ted Hamer was the time I called asking to use one of the new J helicopters to ferry my cruising crew into a particularly remote location. Just a lift in and a lift out. In those days Forest Protection managed the government aircraft. Hammer was known to guard them with his life. I called, knowing it was a long shot but thinking, 'what have I got to lose'. When I called and made my request, there was a long silence. I thought, maybe I have a chance after all. Then there was a reply NO-NO-NO-NO, and he hung up. I got the cruise done with my trusty John Deere caterpillar tractor and wagon."

When asked for his comments on the photograph, Peter Murphy provided the following. "I attended that Superintendent's meeting held in January 24 and 25, 1961. I was at Hinton at that time, and gave a review of the new school and training programs on the second day then drove back to Hinton – we were in full training mode at the time and getting started on fire control training programs. The Superintendent's meetings were useful sessions for updates, proposals and discussion of problems, and great opportunities to meet field staff. I agree with Fred's assessment of Lola Cameron's role, she was a great organizer and was a major link between Head Office and field, fully dedicated to the Alberta Forest Service.

I met Larry Gauthier in 1955 when I was with Forest Surveys under Reg Loomis. I was assigned two major timber cruises that summer, first in the Clear Hills north of Hines Creek and Eureka River, then south of Grande Prairie around Musreau Lake. Both were with packhorse access. Larry was supportive, glad to have the timber

cruised by Forest Surveys so he did not have to divert his field staff. He directed that I should work through the District Ranger, Jack Grant, who was his usual affable self and very helpful in making arrangements with local suppliers and an outfitter. There was no Ranger Station at Hines Creek, Jack ran the district out of his home. He was tagging beaver hides on his front lawn on one of my visits that spring. When my crew assembled, coming by bus from Peace River, we used an empty boxcar at the "end of steel" of the NAR railway line as a temporary bunkhouse. I agree with Fred's assessment of Larry – he was keen and dedicated to the Alberta Forest Service.

At the end of July we moved to Grande Prairie, crossing the Peace River on the Dunvegan ferry, and got the same kind of help from Ray Smuland and his assistant Ev Stanley. The Forest Headquarters was in a converted house, quite cramped, but there were not that many at Forest Headquarters then; the Radio staff were a major component. Ev had arranged for an outfitter from Wembly; we met them at "Smoky City" – one of the first wells in that area and the end of road south. We left with about 16 packhorses, fording the Cutbank River to work between the Cutbank and Smoky Rivers. Ray, too, was glad to see his timber cruised for him, they had tried a cruise during the previous winter but could not do much for lack of access and staff.

I suspect there may have been two factors that may have influenced Ted Hammer's "No, no, no, no" response to Fred's request for helicopter assistance. One was that Ted Hammer had been a horse-back ranger on the Brazeau-Athabasca Forest and would have been conditioned to tough things out on the job. The other, perhaps most influential point, was sensitivity to perceptions of the use of aircraft.

I recall discussions at Head Office, in the old Natural Resources Building, about getting approval to purchase the first AFS aircraft, the Fleet Courier IYZ in 1957. As I understood discussions, the AFS (or at least the Alberta government) had a fixed-wing aircraft during the late 1940s, early 1950s. Although it had been used by AFS on occasion, its use was dominated by one of the Ministers, who used it as part of his ministerial activities, at times criticized. This ended when he pranged it on a difficult landing at Morinville; Premier Manning then decided there would not be any more Government aircraft. All this is hearsay as I recall it.

However, Huestis, Hammer and Platt were keenly aware of the edict and when they got approval, after serious representations, they were resolved that use of the aircraft would be tightly monitored to honour the AFS commitment not to be seen to misuse it. I have the impression that the main rationale for the later purchase of the helicopter was for its importance in fire control, so Hammer's multi "no" to a non-fire application is not surprising to me.

In 1959, when it looked like funds for constructing a new Forestry Training School would be approved, it re-opened the question about where to build it. Several sites had been suggested in a review by Victor Heath around 1953, that included Nordegg, Hinton and the Fox Creek area, but no decision had been made. Nordegg offered the facilities of the abandoned town, including the relatively new school. Fox Creek offered the opportunity to focus on the boreal forest and Hinton

had the Highway 16 access, connection to utilities, and presence of the pulpmill. We narrowed the decision to two locations: Hinton and Fox Creek, summarizing both advantages and disadvantages. Huestis agreed to present the two options to Hon. Norman Willmore – Huestis said that Willmore considered them both and said that if there was a choice, he would choose to have it in his riding. And so it was. As it turned out, Ted Hammer had already identified the site in Hinton and had arranged a land reservation on which to build both a new Ranger Station and the future FTS – based on his knowledge of the area from his Forest Ranger days. He was undoubtedly strongly influential in the decision, but he was remarkably objective in our discussions – I give him a lot of credit for that. And, in my opinion, it was the right decision."



Pat McDonald was one of a handful of Albertans presented with the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers by Governor General Julie Payette as part of the Canada 150 celebrations; May 2018

## SOVEREIGN'S MEDAL FOR VOLUNTEERS

In an interview with Laura Button from the Rocky Mountain House The Mountaineer, Pat said "I got a phone call on a Saturday morning, and you know you get a few crank calls once in awhile. It was this man saying 'Mr. McDonald, you've won the Governor General's award,' and I said 'bull!' Well I had to apologize to the guy, but I thought he was joking." It was no joke. McDonald is one of only a handful of Alberta recipients of a special medal, minted in honour of Canada 150.

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR



## **MARCH 8-9, 2020** **AFS OLDTIMERS** **HOCKEY TOURNAMENT**

Athabasca, Alberta

Contact Charlene Guerin at  
Charlene.Guerin@gov.ab.ca  
for further information



## **MARCH 8-9, 2020** **E.S. HUESTIS** **CURLING BONSPIEL**

Athabasca, Alberta

Contact Greg Boyachuk at  
Greg.Boyachuk@gov.ab.ca  
for further information



## **JUNE 4-6, 2019** **NAIT 1969 CLASS REUNION**

Join us at the Maskuta Creek (west of Hinton)  
group camp from June 4 to 6, 2019 to celebrate 50 years.

Anyone who graduated in 1969, Please contact  
dmbadger@shaw.ca or wbowles1@telus.net



## **MARCH 20, 2019** **15<sup>TH</sup> FHAA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Executive Royal Hotel  
10010 - 178 Street NW  
Edmonton, Alberta

Contact Bruce Mayer at  
Bruce.Mayer@gov.ab.ca  
for further information

# RETIREMENTS



## MORRIS ARCHIBALD

My forestry career started at a young age growing up as a Cub Scout, and Boy Scout in the woods north of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. I had to move, with my parents, to Drumheller, Alberta in 1964, but always knew I would have to get back to the woods. My one and only job with the Alberta Forest Service was joining Junior Forest Rangers in the summer of 1971. I was stationed at the Cache Percotte Forest for the month of July, where the main job was peeling all the logs for the Forestry Museum at the Forestry School in Hinton. We also re-erected the old Moberly Cabin, which sits beside the museum. The month of August was spent at Emerson Lakes building the campground.

In 1972, I attended the NAIT Forestry program, with the second year being in Hinton at the NAIT Forestry School. Memorable names from the school were Bernie Simpson (Head), instructors Harry Edgecombe, Dick Altmann, Al Walker, and Stan Lockhart. After

NAIT, I moved to Prince George, B.C. and worked for Industrial Forestry Service for two years, and then it was back to Hinton. I was hired by Jack Wright, Chief Forester for North Western Pulp and Power, in June 1976. Through organizational and purchase changes, I worked for six different companies, but never left the Hinton operation. I retired from West Fraser Mills Ltd. (Hinton Wood Products) at the end of 2017 after spending 41 years working with a dedicated, knowledgeable team of professional foresters managing the Hinton Forest Management Agreement.

My first three years were spent in the silviculture (tree planting) department in the summers and cruising Permanent Growth Sample (PGS) plots in the winters. In those days, tree planters worked directly for the company being paid by the hour, and they were all university students. Starting in 1979 through to 1987, I worked in the Land Use department, which was headed up by Ray Ranger. I helped Ray (Paul Folkman was also part of our group) manage what we thought, at the time, was a huge increase in oil and gas activities. Compared to today's activities it was not really a huge increase. In the early 1980s, most of the activity was taking place north of Edson in the Marlboro working circle by a large player named Dome Petroleum. Gulf Canada was also active southeast of Robb with the building of the Robb Hanlan Gas Plant, and all associated wellsites and pipelines. Salvaging of timber from energy activities was something new and maybe unheard

of, but we persisted with requesting salvage on dispositions, and it finally became the norm. The early 1980s also saw huge exploration programs with straight line, 20-foot wide seismic lines running as far as the eye could see. Thank God times have changed. In 1988-89, I got my first taste of harvest planning and I knew right away that I was doing a job that I loved and as it turned out, I was pretty good at it. I have always maintained that to be a good harvest planner you need to know something about harvest logging equipment. As a result, in 1989, I applied for and got the job of Company Crew Harvest Supervisor. Expansion of the Hinton FMA was taking place in the early 1990s to accommodate the expansion of our pulp mill. As a result, new roads were being developed and I was on the logging crew as we cut our way north on the newly planned Willow Creek Road. Around this same time, we were developing areas to the west of Highway 40 and Switzer Provincial Park and just to the northwest of Hinton and Brule. The company undertook their first, extensive public involvement planning process in the development of the Athabasca 4 compartment. I was the lead harvest-planning forester and engaged with numerous stakeholder groups from the Hinton area. Between 2002 and 2004, a harvest plan was developed, and subsequently approved by the Alberta government. Harvesting took place in 2005, with the haul distance being only 40 kilometres to the Hinton mill. In

2006, I brought a cable-yarding contractor over from Valemount, B.C. to log steep slopes in Berland 11. This was a first on the FMA.

In 2008-2009, I was part of a Natural Disturbance Harvest Planning group chaired by David Anderson. The group involved government and industry, with the goal of developing a large landscape harvest plan for the caribou zone in the northwest corner of our FMA, portions of Foothills Forest Products operating area, and parts of Alberta Newsprint's FMA. In 2006, mountain pine beetle first hit the northern portion of the FMA with another, more significant, attack in 2009. Harvest efforts were concentrated in the Berland Working Circle part of FMA. I was The Berland WC Area Planning Coordinator, and also became the main planner for the western portion of the FMA with emphasis on steep slope logging. On June 5, 2010, I was attacked by grizzly bear while laying out cutblocks in north Berland area. It was a young sow with two new cubs. The bear had me by the right foot after I fell down while trying to back away to give her and the cubs some space... and then the dog showed up. Thanks to my dog for distracting the bear.

I finished my career laying out main roads in the southwest portion of the Edson Forest Products FMA. This Chungo Blackstone area has more steep ground for future harvesting.

**Addendum by Richard Briand  
and Hal Jackson**

Morris was an exceptional planner and a role model for all employees on the Hinton Woodlands team. His passion for his work was evident every day and he demonstrated that if you love your job, it doesn't feel like work at all. He would always say that he kept working so long

because it kept him in shape for the things he liked to do when not at work. Morris is an avid skier and likely never missed an opening day at Marmot Basin in Jasper! We knew that if there was a good dump of snow overnight that he'd be sending an email saying he was taking a vacation day so that he could hit the powder on the slopes! For most of the last five years of his career, Morris was tasked with training our new hires in the planning group. We were keen to have him show the next crop of foresters how to efficiently approach operational planning. Despite being in his sixties, he remained one of our most productive planners! Morris also demonstrated that the best forestry day was a field day and was always one of the first ones out to the field, often headed out before many other staffers were even at the office. With respect to the bear story, Morris neglected to mention that he continued on with his day laying out the cutblock after the bear left and he rewarded his dog with a steak that night! Then he plugged the holes in his boot from the bear's teeth with duct tape and used them until he could get another pair of Hanwags! Legendary! When Morris retired in December 2017, we knew that part of the soul of our group was leaving. Morris had a great way of connecting with the younger hires and brought an incredible positive attitude to our entire team. His approach to work and willingness to pass on knowledge from his years of experience were always greatly appreciated in the planning group and all that worked with him during his career. He will be, and has been, missed!



**DAVID WEST**

After nearly 40 years in forestry, Dave retired from Tolko Industries on May 31, 2018. Brought up in Ontario, Dave graduated as a Forest Technician from Lakehead University in 1979. Dave's career varied, from private industry, contract work to government; spanning many provinces. From 1979 to 1981 he was a woodlands foreman with Woodlands Enterprises in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan; moving to Winlaw, British Columbia as a woods technologist at Slocan Forest Forest Products and BC Timber. During the hiring phase of the early 1980s, Dave joined the Alberta Forest Service in 1982, working as a forest officer in Alder Flats, Fort Chipewyan, Fort McMurray and Slave Lake. He and family then moved to Peace River where Dave worked in the newly created Daishowa Canada's woods operations shop. In 1997, Dave was a loading and haul coordinator in Peace River, before moving to High Level in 2000 as the Woods Manager then General Manager for Footner Forest Products. The West's then moved to Barwick, Ontario in 2004, where Dave took on the Woods Manager role with Ainsworth Engineered. Returning to Alberta in 2011, Dave worked as a management consultant for

Carson, Atco and Alpac, based out of Edmonton. His last role prior to retirement started in 2013 with Tolko Industries, where Dave was the Manager Stewardship and Tenures. Dave is well respected in industry and government for his collaboration and "how can we make this work for everyone" attitude. He sat on many national committees over the years, and recently as a board member at the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta serving two terms. Retirement for Dave has been "recess" as he calls it since May 2018, with canoeing, camping, motorcycling, touring and generally enjoying things in an "unstructured time" environment.



### WAYNE JOHNSON

Monday April 30, 2018 was my last day in the office (officially because I came in today to send this email). Tuesday, June 19, 2018 will be my last official day with Forestry Division of Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, or the Forest Service, as it will always remain to me. From the summer jobs in Footner Lake and the Crowsnest Pass, and the post-graduation wage employment in Fort McMurray, to my 14 years in Slave Lake and 23 years in Whitecourt, I have to say it has been

a pretty good trip. Not every day was a day to write home about but the good days far outweighed the not so good ones. As I grew from a baby forester into an adolescent one and on to an adult forester and finally a retiring one it has been the new and interesting experiences and people that helped to keep it fresh. Fellow timber management crew members in Footner Lake, Crowsnest and Fort McMurray provided many memorable experiences for an impressionable young boy from Camrose. Even the summer on Petitot Tower in extreme northwest Footner Lake Forest provided memorable moments, like flying into Rainbow Lake at the end of the season and being dazzled by all the street lights and people. Yes, it really is that remote! The years in Slave Lake and Whitecourt, 37 of them in total, were filled with interesting and memorable people; colleagues and friends both inside and outside of government that I will never forget. There were far too many experiences and people over the years to do them justice here so I won't try. Suffice to say that people in the forestry sector and particularly people in the Forest Service are the best people in the world. I will reiterate that working for the Forest Service, regardless of the current structure, organization or affiliation, has been and remains challenging but fulfilling and, in my opinion, should remain a career of choice for future baby foresters and technologists.



### DAVID BRAA AND JOAN SIMONTON

Dave retired as the Hinton Training Centre IT Coordinator, and Joan retired as the Edson Forest Area Information Coordinator, both in June 2018. When asked about their history, Dave provided the following.

You had asked about our time with the government. That goes back to 1990 when Joan started with Water Resources in Edmonton and moved from Winnipeg. In 1991, when our house in the 'Peg sold I moved to Edmonton and eventually found work with Public Works Supply and Services in a data centre in the pedway by the Legislature. Both of us were wage, my position lasted until 1993. Shortly after, I went back to NAIT for a two-year Computer Systems Technology diploma. During that time I had two student Co-op jobs, first supporting the 8th floor in the 108 Street Forestry building as they were just setting up the wide-area network you see today; then filling in while another IT worker went off on a project. Back in school, I was placed in another position with Alberta Education. Just before I graduated from NAIT Joan accepted the Resource Information Generalist

(RIG) position in Edson in 1996. We moved Joan to Edson and I followed upon graduation from NAIT. Through her position in Edson, Joan met Don Podlubny and mentioned her husband was an IT worker. That led to my calling Don to touch base. A short while later he asked me to drop out to Hinton, I assumed for a meet and greet. Turns out it was an interview, so in 1999 I signed on with the Hinton Training Centre. The next year Joan moved to the Hinton office in a GIS support position. In 2006 she left government to work for the Foothills Model Forest, later Foothills Research Institute in their communication area. In 2012, Joan returned to the government as an Information Officer where she remained until this June. On July 1st we moved to Nanaimo, trading five bedrooms for two. We purchased electric bicycles and have been taking advantage of some beautiful weather. If it's hot and sunny we'll be at a beach somewhere, house organization can wait. There will be plenty of time when the winter rains come.



### BYRON GRUNDBERG

I was born and raised on a mixed-farming operation just north of Camrose. My first experience with forestry came during the summer

of 1975 when I participated in the Alberta Forest Service's Junior Forest Ranger work experience program. Our crew was stationed at Pine Creek, Muskeg River and Entrance. The ranger staff at Edson, Grande Cache and Hinton did a great job of providing a wide variety of crew tasks. Work included tree planting, regen surveys, timber cruising, recreation site maintenance and trail building. It also included tours of sawmills and commercial harvesting operations. This program provided a good peek at what a career in forestry might include. Still, I was uncertain whether to pursue a career in forestry or agriculture. This was one of the reasons I chose the nascent forestry program at University of Alberta over the more established forestry program at University of British Columbia. This proved to be a good choice for a variety of reasons. I began my studies at U. of A. in September 1976. Summer jobs at St. Regis Alberta in Hinton confirmed my interest in forestry as a career choice; and, living (playing) conditions in the trailer camp that the company provided in Hinton was a blast. I made many life-long friends during those three summers.

Come graduation in spring 1980, the job market in forestry (which languished through most of the time I was at university) was suddenly buoyant. For the first time since the inception of the forestry program at U. of A., the B.C. Forest Service did some serious recruiting in Edmonton. I was among the dozen or more graduates that headed across the rocks to begin our careers in B.C. My stint there included various positions in reforestation in Williams Lake, Horsefly and Vernon, but it ended in 1986 when my father passed away

and we moved back to Camrose to help my brother and my Mom with the family farm. We stayed in Camrose until 1991, during which time my wife, Heather, purchased the local Shoppers Drug Mart. Grain farming and cow-calf operations were hard work but very interesting (there's something to be said for one-year rotations). However, the cash flow wasn't great, so, when Heather was offered another store in Millwoods, we moved back to the Edmonton area.

A short-term position in the Indian Lands Program at the Canadian Forest Service led to an opportunity to apply for a contract position in woodlot extension under the Canada Alberta Partnership Agreement in Forestry. My background in agriculture and forestry was a good fit, so I was hired to lead the Woodlot Program. I moved across town to work in the forestry headquarters at government centre. My time as Woodlot Manager coincided with an unprecedented demand for private timber that was driven by market conditions and new stumpage policy in B.C. It was busy! I met hundreds of landowners in small workshops across the province and spoke to hundreds more by telephone. I was always interested in the landowner's story; how they acquired their forest land and why; what they wanted to do with it, what they could do with it. There were many communications with other resource professionals as well. I was always impressed by their willingness to share their expertise with me and with the landowners. These conversations sparked my interest in private woodlots and over time, we began to acquire private forest land as we could afford it. Land was relatively

cheap and eventually my wife and I managed to acquire forested property at La Corey, Harmon Valley, High Level and Beaver Ranch.

In 1996, I became one of the founding partners of Ezra Consulting Ltd. After a year or two, I stepped out of this venture to operate as Agfor Consulting Ltd. Shortly thereafter, I completed a course-based Masters of Forestry program at U. of A. During this time, my work included many projects for a variety of clients – private land forestry, ForestCare audits and regen surveys were common work tasks. Beginning in 1997, I began contract work with KPMG (later Bearing Point) to help them manage the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA). Although I didn't know it at the time, this client would figure prominently for the rest of my career. By 2007, most of my work revolved around FRIAA; so, when Bearing Point closed their office in Edmonton, I became one of the founding partners of Redstone Management Ltd. (with Rod Simpson and Todd Nash) and we continued to provide services to FRIAA under this new entity. This changed again in 2009 when Redstone Management Ltd. merged into a larger entity and I became a partner in Meyers Norris Penney (now MNP LLP). I retired from MNP in May 2018.

What were some of the highlights of my career? There are many of course but a couple come to mind. One has been my career-long involvement in reforestation activities which began with my first forestry tree planting with the JFRs in 1975. (This wasn't actually my first experience tree planting as we had completed a fairly significant expansion of the shelterbelt on our farm shortly

before that). Over the years, I've planted tens of thousands of trees and been involved in the planting of many millions more. Although the mechanics of regen surveys get tiresome one thing never does; that's walking through a well-stocked regenerated stand and appreciating the sustainability of our industry. I still stop from time to time to look at stands that I planted or spaced during my summer jobs in the late 1970's.

Another career highlight was my involvement with FRIAA from their inception in 1997. I take great pride in participating in the growth and diversification of this organization and its accomplishments. However, more than either of these, I look back with great pleasure on all the people I've met during my career. Whether its private landowners that I worked with in woodlot extension or the forest industry or government staff that I've worked with over the years, my greatest career highlight is easily the people I've worked with. Aside from my busy career, I always managed to stay involved in a variety of not-for-profit organizations – the Woodlot Association of Alberta, Forests without Borders, Agroforestry and Woodlot Extension Society, my local church and its mission activities – just to name a few. Involvement in these organizations have enriched my life experience enormously. I also know that my family has been and continues to be a blessing to me. I'm thankful for Heather who has been my companion since 1977, my wife since 1980 and my business partner since 1987, and for my daughter Taylor and her husband Chris.



### CLEM WOLFATER

*Submitted by Mike Lutz*

Clem worked with the Alberta government since 1972, and racked up 44 fire seasons, and has been an invaluable member of the team from the moment he started. He first started with Forest Officer Peter Stoochnoff at Dixonville, moved to the airtanker base in Peace River in 1978, and then to Manning when it opened in 1982. Clem's industriousness, level headedness, ability to improvise and troubleshoot have made him the go-to person for many fire seasons and is a huge part of the success at the Manning Airtanker Base. It is of no surprise that Clem has done so well, he was trained partially by Ralph Cowie who himself has over 50 fire seasons under his belt. The Manning base is truly a more beautiful place due to Clem's effort and care. Whether it be his giant Adirondack chair, fountain, or his landscaping and gardening, Clem took a professional approach to each project he began, and it is evident when hearing feedback from all who visit the airtanker base.



### JIM WITIW

After a 37-year career with the Alberta government and DMI, Jim retired on December 1, 2018. Born and raised in Edmonton, his interest in a natural resource career came from family vacations in western Canada, and summer visits with an uncle working for the US Forest Service in Sandpoint, Idaho. During high school, Jim spent two summers as a Junior Forest Ranger in Lac La Biche and Edson, a third summer in a wildfire service support role in the High Level Ranger District. Upon graduation, Jim enrolled in the NAIT Forest Technology program in 1979, graduating in 1981. Other graduates included Wes Nimco, Henry Grierson, Herman Stegehuis, Steve Otway, Karl Peck, Shawn Milne and Dave Lind. With recruitment on the rise in the early 1980s, many job opportunities existed, with Jim starting in the Edson Ranger District in May 1981. Following his marriage that summer, Jim was flown out for a three-week export and inauguration into the widespread large burns of 1981, serving on an 181,000-hectare wildfire in northern Alberta. Thus began a frontline fascination with natural disturbance regimes that would set firsthand context much later during his capstone years interacting

on novel Sustainable Forest Management science partnerships. The years in the Edson foothills formed the basis of Jim's ranger career; regulatory timber harvest monitoring, multiple land uses, recreation facilities management, wildfire regimes behavior and interaction with Indigenous communities. Those days also included working with the Medicine Lodge Minimum Security Crews Forestry Work Program for inmates on various forest service projects, and learning to navigate clay mud back roads with a standard-issue green 1970's vintage  $\frac{3}{4}$ -ton pick-up c/w PTO winch, manual transmission, and manual steering.

In 1985, Jim pursued and accepted a lateral transfer to Athabasca Forest, Fort McMurray District until 1989 serving under a succession of Chief Rangers (Ralph Woods, Rick Arthur) and FO-III Rick Hirtle (master river jet boat instructor). Memories include regeneration survey retreats, campground operation patrols up the Clearwater River with the government jetboats, and winter cruising projects north of Ft McKay. Jim also experienced a continued era of work with the Minimum Security Crews Forestry Work Inmates Program on forest service recreation site construction projects, interacting with Jail Guard Dan MacLennan (who would eventually go on to serve as president of AUPE). The scale of landscapes in northern Alberta Forest Service jurisdictions dictated extensive utility of aircraft, so staff collaborated frequently then with various helicopter, float-plane and grass-strip bush pilot legends. Aircraft memories included assignment to a collection of remote fly-in look-out towers to open, close and support tower personnel, low-level flyovers of the Athabasca River oilsands operations

and Grand Rapids-Athabasca River, and aerial fire patrols through the lakeland Canadian Shield ecology of Fort Chipewyan, Athabasca dunes and the Lake Athabasca delta. Pre-suppression man-up camp assignments in the Fort McMurray District included a cycle of stays at Dunkirk River and Algar Staging Bases, and fire-relief export assistance to Fort Chipewyan District.

With his wife Lorraine and their three young children, Jim left the Alberta Forest Service in June 1989 as a Forest Officer II, to a new opportunity as the Woodlands Supervisor - Land Use Program Coordinator with Diashowa-Canada's new Peace River Pulp Division operation in Peace River. He was recruited by Wayne Thorp, Berry Heinen, Steve Luchkow and Tom Hoffman as part of the initial start-up team for a new Forest Management Agreement tenure. Dave West, Frank Oberle, Larry Kaytor, and Al Dumouchel were recruited around the same year. Gaining some guidance from pre-existing program colleagues at Procter & Gamble (Grande Prairie) and Weldwood (Warren Kehr), Jim inaugurated development of Daishowa's initial land use program, forest protection planning and in collaboration with Ken McCrae, a regional Partners-in-Protection fire prevention awareness program for a 2.5 million hectare Forest Management Agreement tenure. During start-up years, he also prepared applications for a new 50-kilometre network of haul road dispositions, while co-assisting the operations field team in route location and construction of access into formerly uncharted remote north boreal landscapes. In time, Daishowa-Canada would eventually become DMI.

Jim moved through a collection of positions following land use program development; novel harvest plan and legal contract templates development promoting good practices on private timber sales; purchase wood programs delivery; tenure planning; contract operations supervision; and forest management planning engagement with Public Advisory Committees. Notable fellow staff influences included Bob Wynes, Steve Luchkow, Stefan Szabo, Joerg Goetsch, Larry Kaytor, Steve Krahn and Rob Berndt. As evidence of a progressive industry HR-development policy, DMI supported Jim's personal interest in in 2005 to transition from core-forestry work to a non-typical lead role in biodiversity stewardship programs and collaboration in research-to-practices initiatives to his 2018 retirement.

During this period his engagement in new questions and research collaboration intersected the complex challenges of the federal Migratory Bird Conservation Act and Species at Risk Act; woodland caribou, grizzly bear, wolverine, amphibian species; accommodating multiple public and Indigenous values associated with forest landscapes today; and assisting practitioner and workforce stewardship training. Hidden in that work for him was a discovery of rewarding learning through cross-pollination that is borne of multi-disciplinary collaboration between forest and biologist professions, participation in government policy consultation, as well as the cross-sector leveraging of industry-government-academia partnership models. These relationships fed a personal interest for contributing pragmatic perspectives while

instilling development of an aptitude for assessment and synthesis of risks and opportunities inherent in the messages from research investment. On occasion, he was asked to collaborate in published manuscripts and technical reports on conservation and ecological themes.

Jim's curiosities in partner-driven research led to novel northern amphibian research that would see Alberta recognition of a new boreal ecology feature (vernal pools) and Alberta practices for their conservation. A new industry-government working group was co-established in northern Alberta to address local grizzly bear knowledge gaps and novel tools bridging western science with citizen science. Jim represented DMI's interests in world-leading research partnerships; the EMEND forest research station (Ecosystem-based Management Emulating Natural Disturbance) and the fRI Research's Healthy Landscapes program, both guiding and affirming experimental ecosystem-based strategies and harvest designs. Jim was also engaged in establishing longer term stewardship and science project budgets for various collaborative NSERC programs, including a new NSERC Industrial Research Chair in Ecosystem-Based Management at the University of Alberta.

Retirement for Jim will include quiet walks in the woods, discoveries wandering up the center-line of small creek-valleys, slow-water kayak paddling around with my soul-mate, photography, rock-hounding, and of course bluegrass and folk music immersion with his pal Marty O'Byrne. Plans are in-play to re-locate in 2019 to the Okanagan area of British Columbia.



### MICHELLE SHESTERNIAK

Born in Fort Vermilion, Alberta, I grew up on a small mixed farm near Rocky Lane. I attended school until grade 11, then grade 12 in Peace River. After a few years of assorted jobs from gas station attendant, to KFC, to administration at the town of High Level, I got my first job with the Alberta Forest Service in September 1980. I was a clerk typist and at a time before computers, I did all of the typing and filing for the Timber Management section of the Footner Lake Forest. The summer of 1981 brought my first experience of tragedy when helicopter CG-OOM went down in the Peace River near Fort Vermilion. James Mason (who's desk was next to mine) and Roger Oneski (a Forest Officer in Fort Vermilion) were killed. Unfortunately, these were not the last friends to be lost this way, and they are all sadly missed.

Sometime during the following winter I decided that I had enough of typing and filing. I applied and was accepted into the Forest Technology program at NAIT, graduating in 1984. During the summer months, I worked as an aerial observer and then as a compassman and cruiser on the

timber management crew doing timber cruising, planting contract supervision and regeneration surveys. After graduation, I returned to the Footner Lake Forest at Footner Lake and continued working in the Timber Management section. One of my winter jobs was coloring the old Phase III 1:50,000 timber type maps (yes, on paper using actual crayons!). Being paid to colour still brings amusement to my family but at the time it was actually quite hard on the eyes.

In September 1986, I obtained my first Forest Officer appointment, still with the Timber Management section in Footner Lake but now supervising the timber management crew. Most of our work during the summer months was conducted from tent camps in the bush with none of the modern conveniences. I remember one time when we were in a planting camp in May, hockey playoffs were on and the guys were debating injuring one of the crew so they had an excuse to go to town and watch the final! I transferred to Rainbow Lake in August 1988 as a Forest Officer II, then to Grovedale in October 1990. Workload consisted of timber management, land use and firefighting. Fond memories of Rainbow Lake include being in Mobil Bistcho on man-up and shooting two bears that were breaking into the kitchen. I think this helped me gain respect from the firefighters. On another occasion, myself and an eight-man squad had to overnight on a fire north of Bistcho Lake and Delta Helicopter pilot Rob Morrison made one last flight to bring us food and gear, even though he knew he would have to sleep in his helicopter because he did not have time to make it back to base before legal down time.

Moving to Grovedale in the fall of 1990 was a big change in many ways, having spent most of my life within the Footner Lake Forest. There were hills and mountains, lots more people and conveniences! Landing in a helicopter on Copton Ridge or driving that last stretch of road up to Torrens Lookout were challenging experiences for a flat lander!

With the major department reorganization of 1995, I was transferred to Grande Prairie headquarters and looked after the small timber operators for both of the areas that had been the Grovedale and Spirit River Ranger Districts. This was fun, challenging work, and I enjoyed working with the loggers. As restructuring continued, I became a wildfire ranger, and in October 2005, I moved back to what was now the Upper Hay Forest Area as a Wildfire Technologist. In 2008, I was promoted to Wildfire Prevention Officer. Wildfire prevention is always interesting and has seen many changes over the years including the introduction of FireSmart and a major overhaul of the Forest and Prairie Protection Act. The ability to issue violation tickets has brought more and different opportunities and challenges. It is hard to condense over 36 years of experiences and memories into one article. I have enjoyed it all; the friendships, the mentorships and yes, even the difficult times.



**GORDON SANDERS**

*Submitted by Richard Briand*

In September 2018, Gordon Sanders retired from a long and successful career spanning over 43 years in Alberta's forest industry. I am proud to call Gord a role model, advisor, mentor, colleague and friend. I know that I am not alone in that regard! Gord grew up in the New Norway area of central Alberta, close to where his maternal and paternal grandparents homesteaded just before the turn of the 20th century. He is the youngest of four, his parents were both teachers. In high school, his career thoughts turned toward forestry, due primarily to discussions he had with two relatives, one working for the Alberta Forest Service and another working for the Northwest Territories forest service. Although he didn't know for sure what he was getting into, in 1971, he put his name in with Canada Manpower for "forestry work". Two weeks later, he got a call from an Edmonton based consulting firm, Sauze Forestry Services, they were looking for a junior field crew member. Gord says that first year in the field was exciting, challenging, rugged but very rewarding. He turned 18 in a remote camp in the upper

Saulteaux River area laying out cutblocks. Each day started with an eight-kilometre walk to where the block layout started, which “almost put an end to my short forestry career”. Many of you will be able to relate to his description of the general work conditions:

“This was back in the day when check-in times were +/- one week. There were no quads (other than the four-legged ones with hooves) – we walked a lot. No GPS – we relied on the compass. No cell phones or two-way radios. We didn’t think of snowshoeing as a fun sport – it was really hard work.” The following year (1972), Gord enrolled in Forest Technology at NAIT. His first job after graduation was with Canfor in Chetwynd, B.C. It lasted only a few months before he was laid off due to a difficult lumber market. After a few more months back working with the consulting company, he landed a permanent position as a Forest Technician for Simpson Timber, who were about to build a sawmill at Blue Ridge, near Whitecourt, Alberta. Soon after, he got married and started to build a home life and a family. Over the next 12 years, he worked as a forest technician, then contract logging supervisor, then logging operations planner. Simpson Timber later sold to the Alberta Energy Company (AEC) who formed Blue Ridge Lumber. In 1987, Gord transferred to a production coordinator position in the new Medium Density Fibreboard (MDF) plant at Blue Ridge. He says that he learned that the Woodlands Department is not actually the center of the universe in the forest industry. The purpose of the Woodlands Department is to support the manufacturing facility and the business – not the other way around. In 1989, AEC announced it

was building a deciduous BCTMP mill in Slave Lake. Gord was successful in securing a transfer and moved with his family to Slave Lake to build a woodlands department for Slave Lake Pulp. He was promoted to Woodlands Manager in 1995, the same year that AEC sold Blue Ridge Lumber and Slave Lake Pulp to West Fraser Mills. In 2000, Gord’s role grew as West Fraser acquired Zeidler Forest Industries’ Slave Lake Veneer and Edmonton Plywood operations, and with that, he became Woodlands Manager for an expanded woodlands team supporting both pulp and plywood operations. In 2012, he was appointed to the position of Chief Forester for West Fraser in Alberta. He worked extensively with government, provincial and national industry associations, research organizations, Indigenous communities, environmental groups and internal company leaders in all matters related to forest tenure and forest management. Gord always took an optimistic, professional, collaborative approach to the many interesting challenges he had the opportunity to work on over the term of his career. As a result, he built many relationships which will extend far beyond his professional career. Gord started his retirement with an incredible trip to Peru in October. He is active, has several hobbies and has more travel plans. He has lots to keep him as busy as he wants to be on a well-earned retirement. We wish him nothing but the best!



### DOUG SCHULTZ

Born and raised in Edmonton, Doug graduated from Bonnie Doon Composite High School in 1976. Summer holidays were spent around the Fernie area, where Doug and his dad would fly fish every day, sometime twice per day. It was the time spent fishing in the mountains of British Columbia, where Doug got interested in forestry. Following high school graduation Doug enrolled in the University of Alberta and obtained his BSc in Forestry in 1980. Summer jobs for Doug started with the Canadian Forest Service in 1978, then the Alberta Forest Service in the High Prairie Ranger District on an initial attack crew in 1979. After graduating in 1980, Doug was hired by the Alberta Forest Service as a project forester with the Mountain Pine Beetle crew located in Blairmore. In September 1982, he moved to Peace River as a project forester on the Maintaining Our Forests (MOF) program and then was hired as a permanent forester in the silviculture and timber programs. In the fall of 1990, he moved to Edmonton and worked with Evelynne Wrangler as a planning forester. During that time, he led the team in the development of the Timber Production and Reporting System (TPRS). Doug retired as

the Director, Timber Production, Auditing, Revenue and Enforcement Section of the Forest Management Branch in November 2018. One final project his team worked on was the replacement for TPRS, a new program called FORESTS. Leaving, Doug commented he was extremely fortunate to be exposed to many aspects of forestry in the province and worked with many good people, both in government and industry.

When asked about people he worked with and memorable moments, he provided the following. In Peace River, Vern Danes and Dave Cook both gave him the freedom and latitude to run programs in the region. His experience working with the two helped develop his skills in managing people. Doug's philosophy was to tell people what the end goal is, help them when asked, but allow them the freedom to reach the goal. In Edmonton, Evelynne Wrangler in the Timber Management Planning Section, although having a strict approach, she freely passed on her considerable knowledge and experience of forest management to her staff. This helped Doug understand forestry in the province, providing him with the skills to solve any issues raised by field and forest industry staff. This gave him the confidence to tackle any questions or issues. Doug's memorable moments included tent camps on planting, scarification and regeneration surveys. You could always count on a good group of people as well as the occasional bear roaming through the camps. During his time in Blairmore on the Mountain Pine Beetle crew, Doug couldn't believe someone would pay him to walk through the

forests, helicopter him to the top of mountains just to find beetle infested trees. This was more like hiking through the forests and not actual working for a living!

Doug and his wife Jill built a new home in Summerland, and have basement and yard work to do as their first stage of retirement. Next summer they will be found boating on the Okanagan, kayaking many of the smaller lakes in the area, and dipping a line in the water. He plans on getting back into fly fishing and joining a group of like minded individuals who spend their summers fishing the numerous streams, rivers and lakes in the Okanagan. Doug and Jill have been hiking the trails in the area with their dog, and will be joining a hiking group to experience the huge number of trails. And with over 60 wineries in the region, sample the fine wines and craft beers the region is famous for.



### RALPH COWIE

*Submitted by Tom Patreau*

Ralph started his career with the Alberta Forest Service in 1956, as a member of the then called Standby Crew, working for the summer out of the Manning Ranger Station.

From there, he worked the next two years as an emergency firefighter within the Peace River District. In 1959, Ralph did his first stint as a lookout observer at the now closed Codesa Lookout, in the Grande Prairie Forest. From 1960-1992, Ralph went back to working on the wildland firefighting crews. His drive for challenging himself is very apparent; he became a crew leader in 1970, went for his sector leader training in 1971, and received his fire boss training in 1972. From 1971-1992, Ralph was the sector boss for the Peace River District, seeing action on large campaign fires in Fort McMurray, Peace River, High Level, Whitecourt, and Swan Hills. In 1982, Ralph was certified as a line boss. In 1993, Ralph hung up his nomex coveralls, and started working as a lookout observer at Battle Tower, working there for the next 24 years. He trained and mentored many new lookout observers and forest officers within the Peace River Forest Area. Anytime you stopped in for a visit, you could always count on a warm welcome at Battle Tower, with tales of hunting exploits and pest control, over a hot cup of tea and freshly baked Dare cookies. Ralph always kept busy. From truck driving while working as an emergency firefighter, to becoming an instructor for First Aid, chainsaw, Bear Awareness and firearms. Ralph recognized the need to fill some gaps in available instructors in the north, and took it upon himself to take the training to help the crews in the offseason maintain their required certifications. Ralph was recognized with the Order of Saint John's, for exemplary work in the field of training First Aid Responders. Ralph also worked numerous falls and winters with Fish and Wildlife on their predator

control teams. For 60 years, Ralph was part of the forestry family, and a cornerstone within the Peace River Forest Area. Although he has now retired his fall arrest harness, Ralph is still active in providing training to industry and non-industry folks, active with his guiding business, and is still working his trapline northwest of Manning. Tea is still hot, and Beatrice's home baked cookies are readily available for all that stop in.



### JEAN CLAUDE LUSSIER

Born in McLennan, Alberta, I was raised on a mixed farm, a homestead, just south of McLennan where I learned to work with my parents and my siblings in maintaining cattle and cultivating the fields and a large garden. I worked with my father clearing the forest on the homestead to make way for putting in an annual crop. I also helped my father do some logging at a very young age for firewood and building materials. This was my first exposure in forestry. I graduated from the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Science in Forest Science in 1977. After graduation, I worked on the timber management crew in Edson and was a Party Chief on a forest inventory project in Northwest Territories for the Department of Indian and

Northern Affairs in the summer and fall of 1977. I then returned to Alberta and worked on the timber management crew in Whitecourt until August 1978, at which time I was hired as a Project Planning Forester in the Timber Management Planning Section of the Timber Management Branch. In this position, I was involved in developing integrated resource plans, forest management plans for crown and FMA forest management units and participating in annual TM program reviews with individual forests. I worked there until January 1988, when I transferred to the Grande Prairie Forest as a field forester. In this position, I was involved in forest operations, reforestation and reclamation activities, operating ground rules, forest management planning, landuse planning and program reviews. In the fall of 2002, I transferred to the Calgary Forest Area as a Senior Forester and team lead for the development of strategic landuse plans and forest management plans. After a brief period, my role and responsibilities were expanded to include First Nations and public consultations, forest operations, reforestation, reclamation, monitoring and compliance, operating ground rules reviews and the forest health program. During this time, I supervised a team of six to eight staff. I am planning on retiring as the Senior Forester for the Calgary Forest Area effective March 29, 2019 after a very successful career of 43 years in forestry. I have been very privileged to have worked with many people that have supported and mentored me over my career. Retirement plans include spending more with my grown-up children and family, to enjoy nature and outdoor activities, to better my photographic skills and to travel.



### STAN KAVALINAS

Stan started his career with the Alberta Forest Service in 1975, working on the Valleyview fire crew. He graduated in 1978 from the University of Alberta after studying forestry and did a stint with resource evaluation and planning, doing watershed assessments on the Highwood and Sheep River systems. After applying for a particular job, the superintendent told him, "If you want to get ahead, you need to come and do timber cruising." With that, he was off to High Level in 1979 for a few years on the timber management crew. He then took on a project forester role in the Footner Lake Forest at High Level; doing timber cruising, regeneration projects, silviculture and scarification. He then moved to Edmonton in the early 1980s and spent three years in the recreation program. At that time, the Alberta Forest Service had around 160 campgrounds to manage. In 1984, his wife Jocelyne and Stan moved to Grande Prairie where they lived for the next 11 years. Their children Amy and Scott were both born there. In 1995, Stan returned to Edmonton in the Forest Management Branch, with a focus on silviculture. Later in 1999, he moved to the new Forest Industry Development Branch

and was involved in wood supply options for small community timber programs. Stan became engaged in the pan-Canadian intergovernmental files in the early 2000s, from the criteria and indicators of forest management, to the files of the various Canadian Councils of Ministers of the Environment and Forests Ministers. Over the years, Stan has been an active member of the Canadian Institute of Forestry Rocky Mountain Section, sitting on and leading various technical committees, and as a Director and Chair. In his off time, Stan spent many hours volunteering with his kid's ringette, hockey and lacrosse activities. With 41 years under his belt, Stan's plans for retirement include canoeing, swimming, jogging, cross-country skiing, woodworking and his passion for World War I history.



### WES NIMCO

Brought up in Colinton, Wes got into forestry through a neighbor in the area. Larry Huberdeau, Forest Superintendent in the Lac La Biche Forest, asked Wes's mother if Wes had plans following high school, and if not, there were opportunities with the Alberta Forest Service. Wes

started with the Alberta government in the Lac La Biche Forest in August 1978 on the timber management crew. While enrolled in the Forest Technology program at NAIT, he worked as a man-up supervisor at the Beaver Lake Ranger District during the summers of 1979 and 1980. Upon graduation from NAIT in 1981, Wes went to the La Corey Ranger District as a Forest Officer I, then in June 1982 transferring to Wandering River. In August 1986, Wes and family moved to the Nordegg Ranger District in the Rocky Clearwater Forest staying there until January 1989. In February 1989, Wes took a promotion to a Forest Officer III and moved to High Prairie, Slave Lake Forest. Another move occurred in July 1993 to the Smith Ranger District, Slave Lake Forest. Following the centralization reorganization in 1995, Wes became the Wildfire Technologist in the Athabasca Forest Area, located out of Athabasca. The Athabasca Forest Area was the amalgamation of the Smith, Calling Lake and Wandering River Ranger Districts. In June 2001, Wes became the Wildfire Prevention Officer in the new Lac La Biche Fire Centre following another centralization reorganization where the Athabasca Forest Area was eliminated; and the Forest Protection Division and Land and Forest Division's were created. In September 2013, Wes took on the new role of Wildfire Manager and later Forest Area Manager in the Lac La Biche Forest Area until his retirement in November 2018. Wes was a strong advocate and driver in the wildfire prevention program; and was a coach and mentor for new staff, including those in the aerial ignition program.



### DIANE LALIBERTE

*Submitted by Trevor Lamabe*

Diane started her Forestry career on August 31, 1973. She was hired by Dennis Cox to fill a STEP program at the Three Creeks Ranger Station. After that, she applied for and was successful for a permanent administrative position in the Administration Section of the old Peace River Forest. As things were based by program back then, Diane wanted to learn all she could about Forestry so she moved to all the sections as positions became available (Forest Land Use, Timber Management, and Forest Protection). One of the last stops in her career was the move to Clerk 5 (same as an AS5 today) for the East Peace Ranger Station in the early 1980s. There she remained until logistics changed and she took over the administration of the Peace River Fire Centre administration team during the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic in 2007. Diane then became the senior financial administration lead for the fire centre on a full time basis. Diane started with the Alberta government 45 years ago, but on paper it is actually 42.3 (had a couple years off to have two children, a son and a daughter). Her life and her passion is "forestry". She fondly

remembers all the people she has met and worked with over the years, they are all very special to her.



### KENT MCDONALD

I was born in McLennan, Alberta on October 27, 1963 to parents Hylo and Stella McDonald. I am the oldest of four boys, with Cavin, Eran and Wade. We lived in various locations in Alberta, including McLennan, Grande Cache, Hinton and Edson. I completed high school in Edson in 1981, and graduated from the NAIT Forest Technology program in 1984. There were two reasons for making forestry a career after graduating NAIT. First, forestry runs in the family, both my dad Hylo, and one of my uncles, Irv Allen were in the Alberta Forest Service for their entire careers. As well, my youngest brother Wade was also in forestry for ten plus years. The second reason, was the diverse jobs that a person could have working for the government, from land use, timber management, silviculture, recreation management, and of course wildfire. I worked seasonally for the Alberta Forest Service throughout high school and after NAIT until 1987, in numerous locations and positions (Junior Forest Ranger, compassman,

cruiser, aerial observer, camp boss, initial attack crewmember and leader and man-up supervisor). In 1987, I started as a project forest officer in Fort McMurray, Fort McKay and Fort Chipewyan Districts of the Athabasca Forest until January 1988, when I became a permanent forest officer at the Nordegg Ranger Station, Rocky Clearwater Forest. In the spring of 1991, I transferred as a forest officer to the Whitecourt District, Whitecourt Forest. In 2000, I became a forest protection technician, a role I held until my retirement in January 2019. Retirement includes time to enjoy the summers, family time, travel, hunting and fishing, and maybe the odd job.



### ANNE MCINERNEY

Brought up in Saint John, New Brunswick, I had many opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, both on land and on water. My Mom took the family on many adventures; hiking, swimming, Girl Guide camps, etc. Logging and running sawmills dates back to the 1800s in the family, with one relative losing thousands of acres in the Great Miramichi Fire in October 1825. I obtained my BSc in Botany from Dalhousie in

1980, and a BSc in Forestry from the University of New Brunswick in 1984. I worked in Fort McMurray for both the Alberta Forest Service and ATCO, Lac La Biche, the Pine Ridge Forest Nursery in Smoky Lake, Slave Lake, Red Earth, Wabasca and finally Edmonton. I enjoyed the field experiences, so coming into downtown Edmonton in 1993 was a change. This was the same time the government also started changing, addressing the fiscal realities of the day. I spent time in reforestation, the ADM office, program support, wildfire management, Corporate Services Division in Sustainable Resource Development, and eventually Environment and Parks. I have met and worked with many people over the years who allowed me to understand that the people you work with do make the job better even in the most stressful times. I appreciated the opportunities to participate in updating the wildfire program in Alberta, creating the Land Stewardship grants for conservation, and modernizing the contract processes in various iterations of the department. I volunteered as the Treasurer for the Canadian Institute of Forestry for several years, and recently volunteered with Girl Guides in Edmonton. On my first trip north to Fort McMurray in the early 1980s, I was astonished at the vast landscape with little development, and the one road in and out. I have a great memory of working north and east of Fort McKay on a planting camp in late summer and sitting around the campfire looking at the night sky and realizing that many people pay for this type of experience. Meanwhile we were actually paid to be out there. I met my husband while working in Fort McMurray, and after we

travelled separately around the province for our careers, we finally got to be together in Slave Lake. I look back and appreciate I had a great career in Alberta, in spite of the challenging times. I know that most of the people in the Alberta government are committed to making life better for Albertans.



### NORM DUPUIS

Born on January 30, 1959, in McLennan, Alberta, I was raised in Falher, Alberta, speaking French at home, and learning English in school. My dad spent 35 years as a grader operator with the Alberta government; my mother had odd jobs around Falher. After school, I ended up in High Level with relatives, and started my first job as a lumber piler with Swanson Lumber. That was 1976. Swanson Lumber operated a planer mill, the logs coming from the satellite (or gypo) sawmills, like Boucher Bros in Garden River, and Brewster Construction. Swanson would kiln dry it, plane it, and then grade stamp it. The forester at Swanson was Norm Denney; Allan Wahlstrom was the general manager, overseeing the Swanson operation. Stationed in Edmonton, he would come up to High Level to take a look at what we were doing.

I slowly moved to different jobs inside the planer mill until I had an opportunity to take a lumber grading course. At that time, these courses were taught in Edmonton at the Kinsmen Field House. The instructor was Clayton Anderson, with Harold Mack and Ken Larson as field teachers and inspectors. In High Level, Normand Boucher and I'd connected about work opportunities, but unfortunately, the sawmill they had in High Level burned down. Normand Boucher got a contract logging for Swanson Lumber at Chisholm, and in 1978 I joined him and his brother Jean Louis there. I spent five winters or so logging for them, and then moved to Nampa to help them build a new mill. With my lumber grading training and experience, I was hired to manage the Boucher Bros. planer mill. I worked for Boucher Bros. for a total of eight years, and in 1986, applied for a job with the Alberta Forest Products Association when their field inspector, Harold Mack, retired. My interview was with Arden Ritz and Clayton Anderson, and soon afterwards, I got a phone call with a job offer. In 1986, I started as a field inspector for the Alberta Forest Products Association (AFPA), stationed in Grande Prairie, looking after the northwest corner of Alberta. In those days, the Alberta Forest Products Association inspected over 70 facilities. We went to each of the sawmills once per month, and the remanufacturing facilities twice a month. With the workload, we hired a fourth inspector in the mid-1990s.

As Executive Director, Arden Rytz's job was to not only oversee the grading side of the business, but to also work with the Alberta government on forestry policies, quotas, and other issues of the time. Arden's vision for the Alberta

Forest Products Association was to be that one voice representing all of Alberta forest industry. In the mid to late 1980s, companies with pulp mills, oriented strand board plants and plywood plants became a part of the association. When he retired in 1989, Arden Rytz was replaced by Garry Leithead. The AFPA then expanded their role adding a health and safety section, a forestry and environment department, a Forest Care program and a public affairs department. In the early 2000s, Garry asked me to move to Edmonton to be closer to Clayton Anderson, and learn more about the lumber grading program. In 2003, I became the head of the grading bureau when Clayton retired. He had joined the AFPA in 1960, and developed most of the program we have today over his 43 years. I'm planning on retiring in February 2019, after 33 years; golfing will continue to be my favourite past time.



### MIKE POZNIAK

Everybody has a story...here is mine. I was born in April 1947 in Athabasca, and grew up on a farm just north of the Athabasca River. We had a mixed farming operation on four quarters of land, and a half

section of grazing land. Along with two sisters, we did chores, feeding the animals and helping in the fields. None of us liked picking rocks. In 1965 and 1966, I worked for a beekeeper during the summer. In the fall, I attended the University of Alberta studying Education, but that wasn't for me. I worked on the rigs near Stettler...not for me. In 1968, big fires started at Calling Lake and I heard that Forestry was short of firefighters and were picking people up in the bar to go fight fire. So, I sat in the bar and waited for two days...no luck. I drove up to Calling Lake and met up with John Pacholok of Pac Construction. He asked if I wanted a job running Cat. I told him I had never run Cat and he said the only difference from a tractor is that it doesn't have a steering wheel or tires. For the next few weeks, I learned how to run a Cat, and spent my time building fire line. Joe Smith and Dennis Howells were the Rangers at Calling Lake at that time. I observed them being the bosses of the whole operation. That's when I said to myself "hey, I'd like to be a boss" and I signed up for the Forest Technology Program at NAIT. I believe it was the programs fifth year of existence.

My first summer job with the Alberta Forest Service was in Fort McMurray, where I met Dale Huberdeau at Fort McKay. There we cruised timber along the McKay River; I then went to Embarrass on fires where I met Al and Gail Mitchell; off to tree planting along the Clearwater River, and then finished the summer cruising near the Horse River south of Fort McMurray. My second year of Forest Technology was in Hinton. Our logging lab made lots of money that year because I had previous experience running Cat and Skidder. Before I was finished

the year, I saw an ad for a position as a Forest Officer I (FO I) in Conklin. Peter Murphy interviewed me and I got the job. After graduation, I reported to Beaver Lake where Harry Jeremy was the FO II. My next big question, how do you get to Conklin? Fly or Speeder down the rails? Now, I have to get a Speeder license, where the answers to the test questions had to be word for word from the book. Well, I passed and made one trip to Conklin to do grazing lease inspections, and one trip to Imperial Mills with the RCMP to apprehend a bad guy. He handcuffed him to the speeder, and he said to the bad guy, "for your sake I hope a train doesn't come along".

After six months with Harry at Beaver Lake, I was called to the office by Wilbert Coast, Forest Superintendent at the time, who asked if I was willing to trade places with an FO I in Wandering River who didn't like the country life, and wanted to be in a town. I agreed and moved to a small trailer at Wandering River Ranger Station where Dave Brown was the FO II and Leon Graham was the other FO I. A third house was constructed, so I then moved into Dave's house. I met a gal (Wendy) and got married on October 2, 1971. One particular fire DA1-26, was actioned from Wandering River where I was the fire boss. How did we get our supplies way out in the muskeg – para-cargo. I was the para-cargo guinea pig. Things that we learned:

1. Make sure you pack chutes that will actually open.
2. Do not pack liquid dish soap in the same chute with the meat.
3. Be more accurate with drops; many supplies ended up in the trees, where we ended up clearing a few acres

getting the chutes down.

4. Make sure that your cook and flunky are wearing their hard hats while sleeping when a Mark III pump kit hits their tent.

I can still see Paul Rizzoli grinning as he pushes the chutes out of the plane.

I left the Alberta Forest Service in 1974 to work for R.H. Pollock Construction as a bush foreman, where I worked with Nick Bobocel, Hector Toutant, Walter Weibel and Norman Cardinal, to name a few. My main duties were regeneration surveys, road layout, block layout and running equipment. We lived at Imperial Mills and on November 5, 1974, our son Wendell was born. Another opportunity came along with Al Owen who had purchased Pelican Spruce Mills from George Golden, and was building a modern mill near the House River. We moved to Boyle, and I worked helping to build the mill while living in camp. We started in August and the mill was producing around Christmas. At Pelican Spruce Mills, I worked as bush foreman along with Camille Morin. In Boyle, we lived beside a gravel trucker, and since my long stretches away from home wasn't good for family life, I bought a gravel truck and started in the gravel business. I worked many long hours around Boyle, Skeleton Lake, Amisk Lake, and Buck Lake putting in septic tanks, clearing brush, hauling dirt, gravel and trees from lake lots. In 1980, there were numerous large fires in the Lac La Biche Forest and the DND weapons range. For about a month, I worked as service chief out of Beaver Lake for Nick Galon, the Chief Ranger from the La Corey district. I continued with the trucking and backhoe business, and in about 1988, I worked as a consultant for

Crawford Sawmill, Spruce Valley Mills and Double R Forest Products doing logging plans and cut block layout.

In 1989, I got on as Sector Boss based at Wandering River where Leon Graham was the Chief Ranger. I worked with some great people for the next three summers: Brian Stanton, Karl Peck, Wally Born, Jeff Scammell, Diane Peacock, Barney (Ed Barnett), Don Bunter, Gail Mitchell and Kay Hankinson. One summer, there were an awful lot of fires when I worked 56 days straight. Leon called me in and said "you better take a day off". Two days later, I was back. In 1991, Tim Juhlin asked me to come and work for Pearson Forestry Consulting. So, after a summer of planting trees at May Tower, in September I started

my next 26 years of working as a consultant for Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries. The company I worked with underwent various name changes, today it's called TimberNorth Consulting. I was a one-fifth owner of the company. My main job was hiring and managing block and road layout personnel and permanent sample crews. The Alpac FMA covered a big chunk of northeast Alberta, so there were many challenges with access, accommodations, weather, etc. Words of wisdom from Paul Rizzoli to me during this time was "If you are carrying a piece of paper or clipboard no one will ask you to do anything." The people I hired were mostly folks coming to their first job. I would tell them you have the tools and have an idea how to use

them. Here you will learn how to use them and if you stick around for two, three or four years, you will be a sought after commodity by Industry and Government. My biggest accomplishments are the hundreds of young people that I have trained and influenced, they have all gone on to bigger and better things. I am very proud of all that have succeeded. To me, retirement means you can do whatever you want. That means trapping, fishing, prospecting and with global warming raising the level of oceans, Andy Gesner his wife Kim, Wendell and I will be doing a lot of fishing lowering the levels of the oceans and lakes.

Everyone has a problem you know nothing about, so be kind.



Sundre Forest Products presented Minister Oneil Carlier with a ceremonial shovel on July 26, 2018, to commemorate the planting of 100 million trees. L to R: Richard Briand, Tom Daniels, Minister Oneil Carlier, Greg Neale and Gordon Sanders; Alberta Legislature grounds; July 26, 2018

# OBITUARIES

## ALVIN SCOTT

Born March 13, 1943, Alvin passed away on March 3, 2018 just shy of his 75th birthday. Alvin spent 33 years with the Alberta Forest Service as a mechanic, starting first in Lac La Biche in 1964, then moving to Fort McMurray and finally Edmonton at the Depot (Provincial Forest Fire Centre). Most of his career was spent in Fort McMurray.

## LEO (BUD) SLOAN

*Submitted by Viney Sloan*

Bud was born on December 1, 1931 on the family farm up the Swan River valley, near Kinuso, Alberta, and passed away in Slave Lake on May 22, 2018 at the age of 86 years. Bud worked for the Alberta Forest Service from 1958 to 1986, retiring after 28 years. He was the youngest of 11 children, and worked on the farm and in the forests in his early years. In 1950, he married Viney, and together they had three sons. In 1954, they moved to Quesnel, B.C., where Bud worked in sawmills and the forests logging. In 1956, the Sloan's moved back to Alberta, and Bud went into the pulpwood business. In 1957, Bud joined the Alberta Forest Service as an assistant to Joe Kirkpatrick in Slave Lake. He then transferred to Red Earth as a Ranger II. In 1959, Bud went to the Forestry Training School in Kananaskis, then moved to Sunset House, where the family spent six years. He also spent nine months in Wabasca, was

then promoted to Ranger III and was transferred to Smith, where he spent 15 years. Bud went to the new Hinton Forestry School in 1966 for the Advanced Ranger Course. He moved back to Slave Lake and retired in 1987 after 30 years with the Alberta Forest Service. Bud was an avid hunter and fisherman; and donated a set of moose horns to hang above the fire place at the Hinton Forestry School. For those who had the pleasure of knowing Bud, we can say with certainty that he was a hardworking, sociable man who always enjoyed being active and always wore a smile. He especially treasured time spent with his family and found immense joy in his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Bud will be remembered for his kindness and great sense of humour. When he wasn't smiling or laughing he was whistling a cheerful tune.

## DANIEL WALTON

*Submitted by Walton Family, Edited Pat Guidera (2019-01-05)*

Born March 3, 1956, Wildman Dan Walton walked off into the wilderness for the very last time on Thursday May 17, 2018, at the age of 62 years due to a massive heart attack. As he faded off into the distance, we could almost hear him say, "Adapt, improvise and overcome". So, that's what we will do. Dan was born into a military family, spending his childhood in Minden (Germany), CFB Petawawa (Ontario) and CFB Griesbach (Edmonton). Dan's greatest passion

was the great outdoors. As a child, he would be found in the woods making lean-tos, camping overnight, canoeing, rafting, and whatever he could think of to do out there. His favourite pastimes, all through his life, were wilderness camping, fishing and hunting. Dan chose his life's work to focus and revolve around the wilderness. In 1978, he graduated from the Forest Technology Program at NAIT and became a Forest Technologist (Ranger) serving Alberta for 11 years. Dan was an early advocate of a forest technologist association, making presentations to senior government leaders in the late 1980s. In 1989, 'Walton Woodlands' was created with his wife, Shirley, spending many years working together servicing Alberta's forest sector, involved in a variety of business endeavours, including regeneration surveys, forest harvesting (forwarder/de-limber) and planting contracts. It was during this time that Dan adopted his signature uniform; khaki or flannel plaid shirt, khaki shorts, suspenders and a dirty, rat hat. Always looking to learn new skills and expand his mind, in 2002, when Dan was in his forties, he successfully completed his Executive Masters of Business Administration from the Ivey Business School at the University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario. Afterwards, Dan applied his Business Masters Degree and knowledge in the far north, as the General Manager and Executive Director for Indigenous Boards

(six) in the Northwest Territories. Here Dan built lifelong friendships and advocated for strong business success of Aboriginal peoples and communities. Upon returning to Alberta with this knowledge and learning in the political arena, Dan committed his time to local political work when successfully elected as a Councillor for Brazeau County, and eventually as a senior advisor and leader in the Wildrose Party of Alberta. In 2006, Dan and Shirley developed a successful meat business with a forward-looking brand, which included antibiotic free meats and natural grown healthy meats from their ranching community families in Drayton Valley, and with delivery to any location in Alberta. His winning business model was established as, "Easyford Meats", located on the Fort Road in Edmonton, Alberta. Easyford was the rock in their lives, and is the actual location of Shirley's family homestead where they lived and grew their family. Once they closed Easyford Meats, Dan successfully landed his dream job with Cabala's, the hunting supply specialists, as the Manager of the Hunting Department for two stores in Edmonton. His passion for the outdoors, hunting and fishing, his excellent people skills and strong business knowledge was finally crystallized into this final dream job. He lived his life to the fullest and is greatly missed by friends and family. Enjoy your great last trip Dan, and save some fish for us!

#### **FRANK LEWIS**

Born October 6, 1942, Frank passed away on September 13, 2018 at the age of 75 years. Frank started as a Party Chief in Fort McMurray on January 1, 1968, working for Cliff Henderson. He was then promoted

to forest officer in Fort McKay in the winter of 1969-70, then moving to the Three Creeks District in the Peace River Forest in 1975. In 1980 Frank and family moved to Grovedale in the Grande Prairie Forest, and after just under two years, moved to High Level. In 1984, Frank moved for the last time to Hinton, retiring as Chief Ranger. Frank spent 30 years with the Alberta Forest Service, retiring in 1997. With the many quick moves, Frank and Margaret's children attended five schools in a four year period.

#### **WILLIAM (BILL) KOSTIUK**

Born on March 13, 1929, Bill passed away on September 22, 2018 at the age of 89. Bill was well known in the community of Edson, Alberta where he spent the majority of his life. He moved to Edson in the early 1960s to work for the Alberta Forest Service. He was a fire control technician in the 1970s, and replaced Art Lambeth as Chief Ranger in Edson in 1978. Bill's 30-year career spanned from 1956 to 1986. With his passion for golf, he helped with the development of the Edson golf course. He enjoyed countless

hours on the golf course with his sons, grandchildren and many great friends. Through the years, he coached, was the hockey photographer, or was in the timekeeper's booth. His hobbies included photography, music, and sports; and he liked to share his knowledge, always the teacher and storyteller. Peter Murphy said of Bill, "he was in my first class at Kananaskis, fall of 1956, and I believe he was the top student academically. He participated well and added to the class. My review of staff lists indicates he was

hired as assistant ranger on March 7, 1956, and stationed at Lac La Biche. From 1960 to 1962, he was a Forest Officer III at High Prairie, Slave Lake Forest; then moved to Edson as a Forest Officer III. Bill retired from the Alberta Forest Service on June 30, 1986." Joe Smith recalls, "Around July 1963, Bill and I built a fuel cache at the Sheep Creek airstrip, northwest of Grande Cache; and in September 1963, Bill, myself and Gordon Campbell built the Eagles Nest Pass ranger stop-over cabin, in the Wilmore, north of Rock Lake. Bill and I were forest protection technicians at the Edson Forest headquarters in the early 1980s. Bill had a brother Andy, who was a ranger in the Lac La Biche Forest for awhile."

#### **ROGER OLSON**

Born on April 26, 1942 in Drumheller, Alberta, Roger passed away on October 7, 2018 in Truro, Nova Scotia at the age of 76 years. After graduating high school, Roger completed his Basic Forestry Training at Hinton, Alberta, spending 13 years with the Alberta Forest Service in the High Level, Slave Lake and Lac La Biche Forests before moving to Nova Scotia with his family in 1975. He continued his work in forestry with Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forests, as the provincial Fire Control Training Officer, until his retirement in 1999. As a well-known fixture of the community, Roger was a member of St. Bridget's Parish, and volunteered his time with 652 Milford and District Lions Air Cadet Squadron, as well as the local Scouting organization. After his retirement, he kept busy with various activities, which included being a musician with a local dinner theater troupe, being a member of the St. Bernard's Knights of Columbus,

political events, and any other events that Yvonne volunteered his services. Roger was known for his love of Country and Celtic music, played a variety of instruments and often spent time attending jam sessions with various groups. Every autumn, Roger would load up one of his vehicles with apples, and other assorted produce and headed to Cape Breton to sell his wares. What started as a fundraising idea for the Truro Girls Pipe Band, blossomed into an enjoyable Fall past time that spanned 40 years, leading to him being known as "The Apple Man" of Inverness County.

Walter Fanning, the Executive Director, Regional Services Branch, Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forestry, said "Roger was a well-loved and dedicated employee to the Department of Lands and Forests, later renamed Natural Resources a few years prior to his retirement. Warmly remembered as the 'Gentle Giant', he was instrumental in setting the foundation of what is now a high quality and respected Wildfire Team in our Department, with a reputation nation-wide. In the early days, every employee was required to help with forest fires, so they knew him and he knew them. I had the pleasure of working with Roger for a few years before he left the Shubie Fire Control Center. It was an honour that I, and the many staff who knew him much longer, will long remember."

### JACK WALKER

Jack was born in Sibbald, Alberta on July 8, 1923, and passed away on October 12, 2018 at the age of 95 years. In 1936, the family moved to Markerville area. Jack joined the RCAF in 1942 and served

overseas in WW2. While in England, he met and married his first wife, Connie in 1945. Upon returning to Canada, he started work for the Alberta Forest Service. He worked as a forest ranger at Clearwater and Red Deer Ranger Stations from 1946 to 1952. For him it was much more than a job, but a lifestyle he grew to love. It was during these years that Jack started his work with horses and it would remain a lifelong hobby. His love of the West Country stayed with him and he would return whenever the opportunity came a long. In a 2004 interview with Dennis Friske, Jack said he participated in the flagging of the right of way for the Forestry Trunk Road between the Red Deer River and the Clearwater River.

### DAN SLAGHT

Born on March 9, 1946, Dan passed away on May 31, 2018 at the age of 72 years. Dan graduated from the NAIT Forest Technology program in 1969, with Wayne Bowles, Mel White, Gerald Sambrooke and Jim Skrennek. Dan's first posting upon graduation was to Red Earth, then moving to the Smith Ranger District, both in the Slave Lake Forest. The yearbook write-up on Dan had "Came to us from Winterburn and vainly tried to maintain our high moral standards. He has a serious weakness for nurses and enjoys our parties. He is a firm A.F.S. enthusiast and is going to be posted at Red Earth." Mel White said that during first year he, Dan and Terry Turner worked together cruising timber in Fort McMurray. Joe Smith said he worked with Dan on a cruise northwest of Wabasca during winter 1971-72, "where it was -50F at night, and would warm up to -25F during the day. Dan always had his coat wide

*open with the steam rolling off him. I think he was the toughest guy there." He attended the Advanced Land Use course with Wayne Bowles during the summer of 1976. Dan worked in Pollution Control in the Land Use Branch in Edmonton in the late 1970s, then moved to Wandering River as assistant chief ranger. Dan then moved to Lac La Biche headquarters as the Land Use Officer in about 1984, a role he held until his retirement in 2001 after a 32 year career. Dan was well respected, worked diligently with the energy and forest industry to implement new policies on land use, especially with new efforts on caribou protection. Brydon Ward commented "his diplomacy saved our ass more than once with industry and dispute resolution."*

When asked about Dan, many people indicated that Dan was a kind and compassionate person, always wanted to do the right thing, and would give you the shirt off his back. While in Lac La Biche, he and his wife Mary were named citizens of the year for their ongoing volunteering work. They continued supporting Ducks Unlimited for years, even after their move to Edmonton.

### EDWIN (ED) JOHNSON

Born November 30, 1940, Ed passed away on July 2, 2018 at the age of 77 years. Ed started with the Alberta Forest Service as a lookout observer in 1963 out of Fort McKay, then moving to a ranger position in Slave Lake in November 1964. Ed attended the Basic Ranger Course at the Hinton Forestry School while in Slave Lake. He was the Land Use Officer in the Slave Lake Forest in the late 1960s, then Chief Ranger in Wabasca in

early 1970s. In 1970, Ed completed the Advanced Ranger Course at the Hinton Forestry School. Ed moved to the Lac La Biche Forest as Forest Protection Officer in the mid-1970s, then later to the Whitecourt Forest in the same role. In the mid-1980s, Ed moved to Edmonton as the manager of the Mechanical and Warehouse Section, a role he held until his retirement in 1995, after 32 years with the Alberta Forest Service. Ed was involved with many wildfire overhead teams over the years, and was chair of the 1985 task force that developed the early priority mapping system for Alberta. In 1988, he and Lou Foley presented the paper Alberta's System for Determining Fire Protection Priorities, at the First Interior West Fire Council Annual Meeting and Workshop, held in Kananaskis Country. Upon retirement, Ed instructed at the Grande Prairie Regional College with Mort Timanson, Dave Brown and Joe Smith.

### CONNIE KADYK

Born on February 13, 1951, Connie passed away on December 30, 2018 at the age of 67. Connie started her career with the Alberta government in January 1971. She worked in the Organization Development Division, Public Administration Office in Edmonton as the Office Manager. In February 1974, Connie transferred to Grande Prairie where she was the Office Manager for Mental Health Services, Alberta Social Services and Community Health. She remained in this position until March 1979 when her husband Andy, transferred to Rocky Mountain House. Connie took time off from public service for a number of years to stay home with her family. In May 1982, Connie

started with the Rocky District office of Alberta Social Services and Community Health as an Office Manager. She remained in this position until October 16, 1987, when she transferred to the Rocky/Clearwater Forest Headquarters with Lands and Forest Services as an Administrative Officer. Through various organizational changes, the Rocky/Clearwater Forest became the Parkland Region, then part of the Southern East Slopes, the Rocky Fire Centre and finally the Clearwater Wildfire Management Area in 2001. Connie was the Finance and Administration section head until 2006, when the finance, human resource and administrative roles within Sustainable Resource Development were amalgamated into one unit in 2006. Connie supported the wildfire management program as a Time Unit Leader and Finance Section Chief with export to Fort McMurray on the Mariana Lake wildfire in 1995 and Val d'Or, Quebec in 2005. In 2004, Connie led the Time Unit Leader task force to redesign the Time Officer Course. After 32+ years of public service, Connie announced her retirement effective April 1, 2007.

### WAYNE SMITH

Born on May 28, 1944 in Sussex, New Brunswick, Wayne, a long time resident of Hines Creek, Alberta, passed away on January 6, 2019 at the age of 74. Wayne graduated from the first NAIT Forest Technology class in 1966 with people like Dennis Cox, Larry Huberdeau, Revie Lieskovsky and Gordon Bisgrove. Wayne served as a forest officer and fire patrolman for most of his career; also working for Zavisha Sawmills. Forestry was much more than a job, it was as much a lifestyle and passion

for Wayne. It complimented well his hobbies in woodworking, painting and drafting. He retired in 2010, but contributed back to his community over the years-as a member of fire department and End-of-Steel Museum Society.

### FREDERICK (FRED) SUTHERLAND

Born in Peace River on February 26, 1923, Fred Sutherland passed away in Rocky Mountain House on January 21, 2019 at the age of 95 years. As a boy, Fred developed a great love of the outdoors, spending every free moment in the "bush". As a schoolboy, Fred also discovered his other lifelong love, Margaret Baker. In 1941, as soon as he turned 18, Fred left high school and joined the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). He was seconded to the British Royal Air Force, and served in the 50 and 617 (Dambuster) Squadrons. Fred was front gunner in the aircraft that broke the Eder Dam in May 1943. On September 17, 1943, he was forced to bail out of a crippled bomber over Holland. Hiding and travelling with the help of the Dutch and French Resistance, he reached the Pyrennes. From there, the Basque guided him into Spain. He arrived in Gibraltar in December 1943. Fred and Margaret were married in Edmonton on January 5, 1944, the day after his return; they were married for 73 years. Fred was a gunnery instructor in Canada until he left the RCAF in November 1944. He then worked as a clerk, and with night classes, completed his high school. Fred graduated from the University of British Columbia with a degree in Forestry in 1952. He worked for numerous logging companies in British Columbia before joining the Alberta Forest Service in 1958. After postings in Blairmore, Calgary,

and Edmonton, he moved his family to Rocky Mountain House in 1964 to become Superintendent of the Rocky Clearwater Forest. He really loved his work, especially when he could get out of the office into the "bush". One of the main reasons Fred stayed in Rocky was the amazing people he had to work with. He retired in 1986.

Peter Murphy, forest historian and friend of Fred provided additional context on Fred's career. "Fred was a gentleman of the old school; quiet, personable friendly and unpretentious -- knowledgeable and visionary; he had a great way with people, showing respect and humility while being very convincing about what was needed to achieve. He got results while engaging the support of his staff. He was effective and highly respected. I was working out of Edmonton with the Forestry Training School and the Alberta Forest Service training program from 1956, until the training school was built, and we moved to Hinton. During that time, Fred and I shared an office (four of us) in the old Natural Resources Building, so I got to know him quite well; Joan and Margaret were also friends. Following his graduation in Forestry at UBC in 1952, he worked four years in British Columbia with forest industry on logging operations. Wishing to return to his home province of Alberta, he signed on with the Alberta Forest Service in 1958, as forester for the Crowsnest Forest. With his forest industry background and managerial skills, it was only four years before he was recruited to fill a new position in the Forest Management Branch in Edmonton as Forester in charge of Woods Operations. During his next four years, he worked with forest industry for forestry operations

to become more efficient. He introduced principles of logging planning and encouraged upgrading of logging equipment and sawmilling machinery. As a result, production and quality of products increased, along with utilization. His combination of practical experience and his quiet but very persuasive approach highlighted his success in effecting changes. He was highly respected, both for his capabilities and for sincerity in his relationships. Fred and Margaret missed the forest, so in 1964, he transferred to Rocky Mountain House to serve as Forest Superintendent of the Rocky-Clearwater Forest. Again, his quiet but encouraging approach revitalized the outfit, and enlisted the support of forest industry, the burgeoning energy sector and increased recreational users to collaborate in protecting and managing the area. Fred was highly regarded and respected. On retirement in 1986, he and Margaret stayed on in what had become their 'home' area and continued to explore it together.

### JOE BURNSTICK

On January 25, 2019, Joe Burnstick passed away at the age of 73. Joe started working for the Alberta Forest Service in the late 1960s, until early in the 2000s. Joe primarily worked out of the Whitecourt Forest, mainly from the Fort Assiniboine and Swan Hills offices and bases. He was a firefighter, man-up supervisor, sector boss; and more importantly, a mentor and trainer for young forest officers and Indigenous firefighters. Joe was instrumental in working with Chief Ranger Ken Porter on the all Indigenous helitack crew in the 1980s.

# FOREST HISTORY PHOTO CORNER

## BUD SLOAN COLLECTION

Leo (Bud) Sloan worked for the Alberta Forest Service from 1957 to 1987, retiring after 30 years. He was a ranger in Slave Lake, Red Earth, Sunset House, Wabasca and Smith. Bud attended the Forestry Training School in 1959, the last year training was held in Kananaskis before training moved to Hinton in 1960. Bud was part of a larger Sloan clan who all worked for the Alberta Forest Service in the Slave Lake area. This collection was provided by his wife Viney.



3

DEPARTMENT OF THE  
1521 - Lesser Slave GENERAL RECEIPT  
Forestry

\$ 35.00

Received from Jesse Sloan  
of Kinuso, Alberta.  
the sum of Thirty-Five and No/100  
in payment for guarantee deposit - T.S. Lesser

REV. FORM 30



1. L to R: Bud Sloan, Art Peter, Don Lowe, Don Harvey, Bruce Johnson, Eric Seyl; Forestry Training School year end celebration; Kananaskis; December 1959

2. Peter Murphy, instructor at the Forestry Training School; Kananaskis; December 1959. This was the last year training was held in Kananaskis, the Forestry Training School in Hinton opened in 1960.

3. Department of Interior general receipt issued to Jesse Sloan, father of forest ranger Bud Sloan. Receipt was for \$35.00, as a guarantee deposit for a timber sale in the Lesser Slave area. C. H. Morse was the Dominion Forestry Branch Timber Inspector that issued the receipt on February 24, 1930. In October 1930, forest resources were transferred to Alberta from the federal government; this would have been among the last of the timber sale transactions Charles Morse would have been involved with.

## HERB WALKER COLLECTION

Herb Walker began with the Alberta Forest Service in 1958 as a timber cruise compiler in the Slave Lake Forest. He then cruised timber and worked as a radio operator, before becoming an Assistant Ranger in 1960. He then held positions in Smith, Fox Creek and Cold Creek, before moving to Fort McMurray in 1979 as the land use officer. In 1983, Herb moved to Hines Creek as the Chief Ranger, returning to Fort McMurray as the land use officer in 1987. He retired after 33 years in 1993.





1. L to R: Jack Macnab (FTS), Joe Burritt, Dave Schenk, Melvin Tessmer, Laverne Larson, Andy Kostiuik, Wayne Cole, Larry Derbyshire, Wayne Robinson, Bill Wuth, Lou Blasius, Ernie Duchesne, Stan Fischer, Gordon Japp, Albert Cauchie, Peter Klymchuk, Herb Walker, Gordon Matthews, Bob Richmond, Conrad Bello, Larry Kennedy, Roman Bizon; Basic Ranger Course; 1962

2. Student John Stepaniuk on the bronco barrel at the Forestry Training School Bull of the Woods, 1962

3. Land use reclamation field tour; Gordon Bisgrove (back only), Ed Dechant (white jacket), Don Law (blue jean shirt), Howard Anderson (to the right, green jacket);

4. Alberta Forest Service wooden bridge, built at Mile 27 on the Whitefish Road; 1963

5. Lorne Goff in drafting class; Advanced Ranger Course; 1960s

6. L to R: Rangers Phil Nichols and Herb Walker; 1963

7. Alberta government Bell 47J CF-AFK helicopter lowering Laverne Larson by winch; Forestry Training School; 1962

8. Ranger Vic Hume on patrol in Flatbush; 1965

9. Norm Rodseth on the Dog River; Athabasca Forest; 1980s

10. Wayne Cole outside tent; cruising in Red Earth; 1963



# FOREST HISTORY PHOTO CORNER





1. L to R: Forest Officer Ed Pichota with Chief Ranger Bill Kostiuik; Edson Ranger District; Edson Forest; late 1970s

2. Don Cousins; Alberta Sled Dog Racing Association; 2011

3. Department of Lands and Forests display; Natural Resource Conference; January 1959

4. Wes Nimco providing an overview of the May 2018 wildfires in the Lac La Biche Forest Area; May 26, 2018

5. Alberta Forest Service display; World Forest Congress; 1960

6. Don Cousins and his sled dog racing team; Anchorage World Championship Sled Dog Race; 2017

7. Jason McAleenan, Mike Wagner, Tim Juhlin, Darren Tapp, John Whitworth, Ross Spence and Bruce Mayer; Highwood forest management woods operations tour; Calgary Forest Area; April 4, 2018

8. L to R: Don and Faye Cousins; Anchorage World Championship Sled Dog Race; 2017







1. Bruce Mayer presenting the wildfire retirement print to Wayne Johnson on his 38 years of service to the Alberta government; Swan Hills Wildfire Base; May 15, 2018

2. Alberta Forestry Division Senior Foresters; Tracy Parkinson, Derek Bakker, Bert Ciesielski, Jean Lussier, Wayne Johnson, Rob Popowich, Tim Heemskerk, Rob Stronach, Amy Wotton, Kevin Johnson, Andre Savaria; Swan Hills Wildfire Base; May 15, 2018

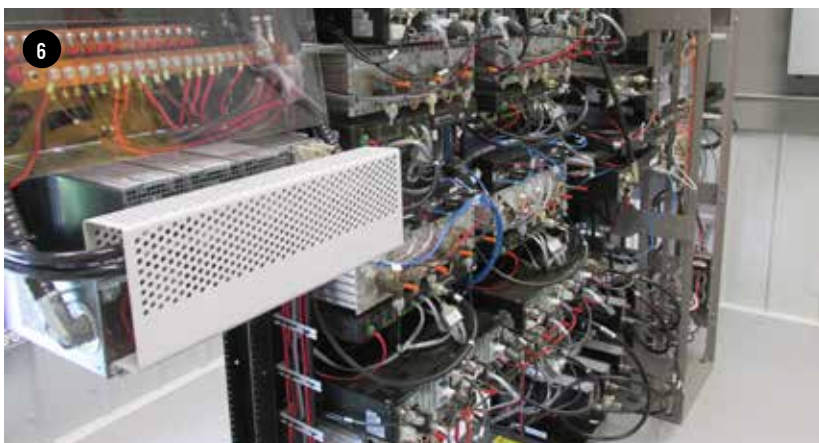
3. Female wildland firefighters from across Canada (represented by Hayley Hallihan, Natasha Aellette and Olivia Amos from New Brunswick; Nichole Selk, Ali Gillis and Kara McCurdy from Nova Scotia; Sara-Jay Nogel, Samantha Salisbury and Ashley Gammie from Alberta; and Yanne Dufresne from Ontario); Rock Island Lake wildfire; Lac La Biche Forest Area; May 2018

4. Marten Mountain Lookout and Communications Tower; note square cupola half way up the tower; Marten Mountain, Slave Lake Forest Area; June 14, 2018

5. L to R: Kevin Johnson and Brian Lopushinsky; student tree planting day; Huestis Demonstration Forest; May 31, 2108

6. Wildfire LWF-121-2018, 10 kilometres south of Janvier; Back Row (L to R): Patrick Loewen, Morgan Kehr, Wally Born and Forrest Barrett (Incident Commander); Front Row Kneeling (L to R): Adrian MacDonald (Operations Chief), Bruce Mayer, Wes Nimco, and Tyler Kehr (Branch Director); Lac La Biche Forest Area; May 26, 2018

7. Darren Tapp presenting a marquetry plaque to Wayne Johnson on his 38 years with the Alberta government; Swan Hills Wildfire Base; May 15, 2018





1. L to R: Tyler Kehr and Morgan Kehr; Wildfire LWF-121-2018; Lac La Biche Forest Area; May 26, 2018

2. Lookout Observer Roy Schneider; Marten Mountain Lookout; June 14, 2018

3. Norman Quilichini, Wildfire Telecoms and Facilities; Marten Mountain FireNet and Alberta First Responder Radio Communication System; Slave Lake Forest Area; June 14, 2018

4. Field visit to Little Buffalo and Cadotte Lake; L to R: Bruce Mayer, Henry Auger, Derek Bakker, Vicky Bosse, Trevor Lamabe, Amy Wotton and Ken Greenway; Little Buffalo; July 18, 2018

5. L to R: Bertie Beaver and Evelynne Wrangler; Stan Kavalinas retirement party; June 15, 2018

6. You thought hooking up your VCR was a challenge! Marten Mountain FireNet and Alberta First Responder Radio Communication System; Slave Lake Forest Area; June 14, 2018

7. Minister Oneil Carlier with Whitecourt Junior Forest Ranger crew; L to R: Minister Oneil Carlier; Whitecourt airshow; July 28, 2018

8. L to R: Bruce MacGregor and Paul Rizzoli; July 28, 2018







3

1. L to R: Patrick Loewen, Bruce Mayer, Wally Born and Morgan Kehr; Alberta Wildfire Klondike Days Parade pancake breakfast; June 20, 2018

2. Alberta wildland firefighters and orientation on a U.S. Park Ranger boat; Angel Springs, Washington State; August 2018

3. L to R: Jessica Cornish, Minister Oneil Carlier, Bertie Beaver and Malcom Robertson; Whitecourt airshow; July 28, 2018

4. Alberta wildland firefighters waiting for transport; Angel Springs, Washington State; August 2018

5. L to R: Stan Kavalinas and Bertie Beaver at Stan's retirement; June 15, 2018

6. L to R: Gordon Bisgrove, Dennis York and Ed Dechant; Ed Johnson Memorial; St. Albert; August 2018

7. Alberta Agriculture and Forestry wildland firefighters; Back Row (L to R): Jordan Wolfe, Chris Cayabyab, Jorgo Van Ovost and Cyprian Zaleski; Front Row (L to R): Logan Mahoney, Jenelle Fenty and Trevor Leslie; Angel Springs, Washington State; August 2018

8. L to R: Lyle Dechief, Darren Tapp, Owen Spencer, Tim Heemskerk, Wendy Crosina, Vashti Dunham, Darren Aiken and Bruce Mayer; Weyerhaeuser Grande Prairie forest management field tour; August 23, 2018

9. L to R: Tim Heemskerk, Lyle Dechief and Vashti Dunham; Weyerhaeuser Grande Prairie forest management field tour; August 23, 2018



6



8



9





1. Back Row (L to R): Linda Witham, Dave Heatherington, Bart McNally, Colin Campbell, Mike Woods, Marc Cormier, Ken Yackimec, Darnell McCurdy, Eric Enokson, Brent Schleppe, Roger Marchand, Joe Lyons, Elaine Mayer, Steve Janzen, Bruce Mayer; Front Row (L to R): Mark Storie, Val Majeau, Barb St John, Greg Westlund, Christine Woods, Dean Polvi, Peter Koning, Paul Hostin; 1981-1983 NAIT Forest Technology 35th reunion; Devon, Alberta; September 15, 2018

2. L to R: Linda Witham, Carol Doering, Carol Schmanke; 1981-1983 NAIT Forest Technology 35th reunion; September 15, 2018

3. L to R: Gordon Bisgrove and Don Law; Ed Johnson Memorial; St. Albert; August 2018

4. L to R: Gordon Bisgrove, Norm Olson and Rick Smith; Ed Johnson Memorial; St. Albert; August 2018

5. Quilt Linda Witham created for the 1981-1983 NAIT Forest Technology 35th reunion; September 15, 2018

6. L to R: Leroy Reitsma (President and COO), Rob McCurdy (CEO), Minister Oneil Carlier; Pinnacle Renewable Energy pellet plant grand opening; Evansburg, Alberta; September 25, 2018

7. L to R: Kevin Johnson, Darren Tapp, Shawn Barraclough and Bruce Mayer; forest management woods operations tour; Whitecourt Forest Area; October 3, 2018

8. Rick Moore (bottom row, right) was honoured with Parks Canada staff for their collaboration in managing the fall 2017 Kenow Mountain wildfire in Waterton Lakes National Park; Ottawa; September 12, 2018. Back Row (L to R): Daniel Watson, Michael Wernick, Ifan Tomas, Natalie Fay, Stephen Cornelsen, John Stoesser, Kevin Ferrier, Jed Cochrane; Front Row (L to R): Scott Murphy, Jonathan Large, Dennis Madsen, Victor Kafka, Joe Fontoura, Rick Moore

9. L to R: Tim and Hope Klein, Marj and Gord Graham; Nova Scotia; September 2018





1. L to R: Cliff Smith, Con Dermott, Fred McDougall and Bruce Mayer; Vanderwell Contractors private land plantation field trip; October 18, 2018

2. L to R: Quinn Archibald, Dylan Eaton, Christopher Vawter, Michael Schmidt; Fort McMurray Forest Area staff participating in Operation Christmas Child, through the Samaritans Purse International Relief Canada; November 2018

3. L to R: Fred McDougall, Cliff Smith and Con Dermott; Vanderwell Contractors private land plantation field trip; October 18, 2018

4. L to R: Con Dermott and Fred McDougall reviewing maps of Vanderwell private land holdings; Vanderwell Contractors private land plantation field trip; October 18, 2018

5. L to R: Bruce Mayer, Darcy Dickson, Peter Andrews, Tyler Steneker, Hal Jackson, Rich Briand, Jeff Morris, Steve Blanton, Jed Begin, Mark Cookson, Darren Tapp, Mark Dewey, Shane Sadoway, Stacey Pike; Blueridge West Fraser FMA field tour group picture; December 6, 2018

6. L to R: Kevin Jewett (Tolko), Oneil Carlier (Minister, Agriculture and Forestry), Danielle Larivee (Minister, Children's Services and MLA for Lesser Slave Lake), Kevin Albrecht (West Fraser), Ken Vanderwell (Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd.); Marten Hills Forest Management Agreement Signing; Slave Lake; December 13, 2018

7. L to R: Chris Ingram, Kevin Vander Haeghe, Erica Samis, Aaron Jones, Peter Andrews, Darren Tapp, Hal Jackson, Robert Popowich, Tracy Parkinson, Richard Briand; Agriculture and Forestry and West Fraser mountain pine beetle tour; Edson and Hinton forest management areas; December 12, 2018





1. L to R: Nathan Friesen, Bruce Mayer, Darcy Dickson, Jeff Morris, Shane Sadoway, Rich Briand, Hal Jackson, Jed Begin, Tyler Steneker, Peter Andrews, Mark Cookson, Darren Tapp

2. L to R: Nathan Friesen, Hal Jackson, Shane Sadoway, Rich Briand, Darcy Dickson, Jeff Morris, Darren Tapp, Mark Cookson (hidden in shadow), Jed Begin, Tyler Steneker, Bruce Mayer, Peter Andrews; Hinton West Fraser FMA field tour group picture; December 7, 2018

3. L to R: Left to Right: Kevin Jewett (Tolko), Kevin Albrecht (West Fraser), Oneil Carlier (Minister, Agriculture and Forestry), Danielle Larivee (Minister, Children's Services and MLA for Lesser Slave Lake), Ken Vanderwell (Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd.)



4. Back Row (L to R): Dan LeFleur, Ross Spence, Rob Berndt; Front Row (L to R): Tim Juhlin, Ed Kulscar, Wally Born, Kirk Hawthorn, Chris Jolly, Bruce Mayer; Mustang Hills forestry tour; Calgary Forest Area; January 4, 2019

5. Alberta Wildfire Ranger Chad Williamson at the Canadian Fallen Firefighter Foundation fallen firefighter memorial; family with helmet Chad presented; Prime Minister Trudeau in the background; Ottawa; September 9, 2018



6. L to R: Paul Lane and Ed Pichota exchanging business cards; Forest History Association AGM; March 18, 2018

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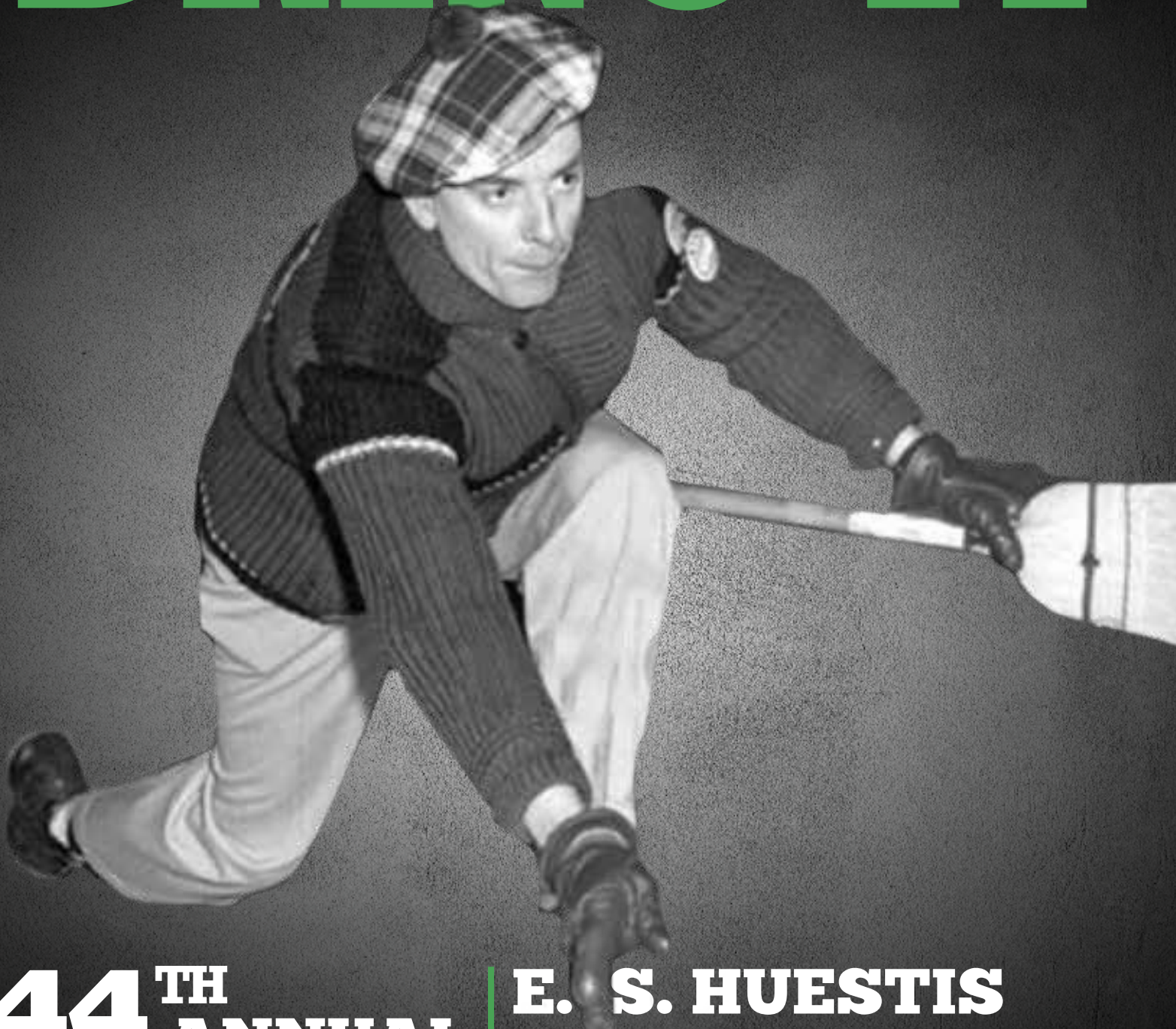
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