

PARK WARDEN SERVICE ALUMNI SOCIETY

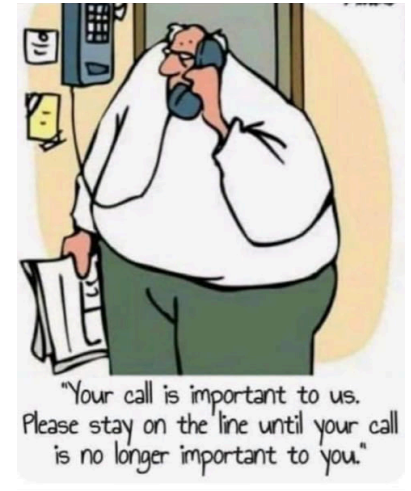
Fall 2021 Newsletter

BOX 1611, Turner Valley AB., T0L 2A0

E-mail: parkwarden2008alumni@hotmail.com

Website: <https://parkwardenalumni.com>

Membership: Open to all former park wardens and all those supportive of the Alumni Society and its work



Our Mission Statement

“Maintaining the culture and tradition of the National Park Warden Service by fostering good will and assistance through mentoring, volunteerism, historical commemoration, advocacy, and social activities.

ALUMNI PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Good day to all our Warden Alumni, Associates, Life, Honorary and Supporting members, current Parks Canada Agency Park Wardens and Resource Conservation personnel and the many friends and supporters of the Park Warden Service Alumni Society. The members of the Alumni Board of Directors and I trust that this newsletter finds you all safe, happy and healthy. I am certain you will agree with me that we are living in truly strange and challenging times today, given COVID 19 and the growing geopolitical challenges. Fall is fully upon us, and the winter cold and snowy weather is lurking around the corner. Where did summer go? We are fast approaching the Christmas season. How time flies when you are having fun coping with a pandemic and changing world geopolitics. As hardy and proud Canadians we are always up for a challenge.

UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES AND ORAL HISTORY OVER THE PAST YEAR

The major project we have undertaken is the oral history of our retired coworkers and colleagues in the former Park Warden Service and other related resource conservation functions within the Parks Canada Agency family in Western Canada. We are contemplating engaging our central, eastern, northern, and Maritime colleagues in future oral history interviews. To what extent is still to be determined. We are in contact with a few key retirees to determine the level of interest in becoming members of the Alumni on the part of the past Parks Canada park wardens and resource conservation personnel.

We were fortunate to obtain a small grant from the Alberta government this year as well as the past few years, to help us fund the 10 or so oral histories carried out each year in the western region. We have now completed about 94 oral histories. Almost all are now up on our website (<https://parkwardenalumni.com>). We have many more to do in the future. Your membership fees, personal donations and the government grants over the past few years have helped immensely in making the oral history project a success. Thank you to all who have contributed and participated in this project. A big thank you goes to Jim Murphy, Don Mickle and Marie Nylund for all the work they have put into this project. Kudos go out to our interviewers: Monique and Susan.



ANNUAL FUNDING EFFORTS

Future oral history endeavours and any other PWSAS undertakings will depend upon your timely membership fees and any donations you wish to provide toward our worthy projects. We have drafted a membership strategy that includes recruiting new members and finding new sources of funding. One funding initiative we have begun is the sale (\$5 including postage) of the Alumni's limited-edition crest. They can be sewn or glued onto jackets and hats or stuck to anything you like. They are a great souvenir and can be purchased from Marie Nylund at parkwarden2008alumni@hotmail.com.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We held our AGM on Wednesday, October 27. The Minutes have been posted on the website and a summary is provided below.

FUTURE PLANS

It needs to be restated that the Alumni Society is not exclusively for past retired Park Wardens and specialists. It embraces all past and current Park functions. With that thought in mind, the future holds great promise for the Alumni Society. Not only will we be conducting more oral history interviews and growing the website, but we will also be working toward reaching out to our central and eastern colleagues to encourage them to join us in a more Canada-wide alumni embracing all past and current park wardens, and staff in resource conservation specialties (public safety, vegetation and fire management, firearms, law enforcement, and other related functions) within the Parks Canada Agency.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

As the new Board works quietly in the background, be assured we are working to build the extensive history of the former Park Warden Service, and Parks Canada in general, by gathering and highlighting, both on our website and at the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, the history of many of the great people who occupied positions in the many generalist functions, management and specialties that made a career with Parks Canada great.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, stay safe and healthy.

CHEERS

David Reynolds, President, Park Warden Service Alumni Society

The Results of our 2021 A.G.M.

Despite hopes for an in-person A.G.M. it proved otherwise: back to Zoom. Twenty three people took part including board members sans Bob Haney and Don Mickle. It was good to see Mac and Cathy Elder as well as new members George Lukiwski and Bob Elliott.

Wielding the gavel Pres. Dave Reynolds kept us on track without limiting discussion. The agenda was not a lengthy one. Routine business, the financial report including the 2020 audit and the membership report, as required by the Society Act, were dealt with. Financially we are solvent, thanks to prudent management and careful record keeping. Membership is slightly up from last year. As you will read we hope it – and income – will increase in the future.

A. ELECTION OF THE BOARD:

Another required action, the election of executive members and the directors resulted in all current executive members being acclaimed with the exception of Bob Haney and Dennis Herman who stepped down. We thank them for their good service, particularly Bob who has been on the board from day one and helped significantly to build our society. The two vacancies were filled by Perry Jacobson, who had also been an original board member, and Alan Westhaver. They both bring experience and will bring ideas to our team.

B. ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Jim Murphy reported on the current phase of the Oral History project which his sub-committee is responsible for. Seven more interviews have been completed with four to go (all our budget allows). As you may be aware the process once the interview is done involves transcribing it and having the interviewee review and approve it. The interviews are now being posted on our website and are being viewed. We are now posting Phase 10 interviews on the website. Judging by the number of views they are being well received. Printed copies of the interviews along with a copy the voice recording on memory sticks are on file in the Whyte Museum where the public can access them.

Monique Hunkeler and Susan Hairsine are the interviewers and, as you probably know, both know the inner workings of the old-style Warden Service from their time on staff in the Banff Warden Office. The ninety-eight interviews done so far is a significant accomplishment and is greatly to our society's credit and reputation.

The list of interviews still to be done now contains 80 names but, as the past has shown, it is very likely to grow. "Funding", Jim has noted, "is key to the continuation of the program." The average total cost of an interview works out to \$500. The bulk of the funding has so far been from Ab. Gov't grants and all board members have their fingers crossed that they will continue. That is the best we can hope for in these times.

C. INCREASING THE MEMBERSHIP

While the oral histories are one of our major accomplishments, the need to enlarge our membership is one of our greatest challenges. Discussion of this matter took up the most time at the A.G.M.

The P.W.S.A.S. newsletter is published 2 or more times yearly for members of the society. Articles, membership enquiries and other matters may be sent to the society at the addresses top of page one.

Executive:

President – Dave Reynolds
Vice-President – Cliff White
Secretary-Treasurer – Marie Nylund
Membership – Marie Nylund

Directors: (2 & 3 year terms)

Perry Jacobson
Don Mickle
Dale Portman
Kathy Calvert
Jim Murphy
Colleen Reynolds
Alan Westhaver
Gordon Anderson
Perry Davis

Regional Representatives

Mountains – Gord Anderson
West Coast – vacant
North & Yukon – Tom Elliot
Prairies – vacant
Ontario – John Taylor
Eastern Canada –

Anyone interested in serving as a Regional Rep. please contact the society

Recent retirees could be interested in joining. The problem is finding out who they are and encouraging them to join. We are offering free one year membership and that has drawn in five new members but, of course, more are needed. The annual \$25 fee of a member is not a deterrent; we have not increased it since the society was formed and don't intend to. So we are turning to our existing members to please let us know of those they know who have retired.

On this front there is an associated issue that gets larger yearly: expansion of the Society across Canada. We have to pass the torch. But who will grasp it?

Cliff White updated us on the new organizational structure. "Functional groups" are now the new way. These groups are national. For example fire crews are prepared to work wherever needed in Canada. The same goes for law enforcement and public safety officers & resource conservation specialists. They don't fit into the old "local and generalist" model that our society currently commemorates. With the substitution of the correct words our "Mission Statement" will serve for the envisioned larger society.

Cliff suggested carrying out interviews with members of those functional groups. This will, hopefully get the word out that the present society is reaching out and will, equally hopefully, start members of those groups thinking about the value to them of forming something similar. Members have been retiring from these functional groups and some of them were once "generalist wardens." Having feet in both camps they could help make the transition and build new "Alumni Societies." The President has prepared a "Proposed Membership Strategy" for discussion by the board and implementation at the next board meeting.

D. OTHER

The Heritage Park Warden Cabin.

The park is looking to name the cabin. Traditionally cabins have been named after a nearby geological feature such as Tonquin or Cyclone. Dave Reynolds suggested "Elbow" as the cabin now sits beside the Glenbow Reservoir on the Elbow River. Perry Davis suggested "R.M.P." as it was in Rocky Mountains Park in its original location at or near Harvie Heights. If you have a suggestion please send it on to Dave by e-mail at david.reynolds@shaw.ca

The park is interested in having retired wardens voluntarily man the cabin on weekends during the summer to greet visitors, and entertain and inform (whatever works) them. A training session is required. Perhaps, once volunteers come forward, one mass training session would suffice. It is **unlikely** that you would have to wear a costume although some item of the warden uniform that you retained **might** be welcome. There aren't that many weekends in the summer so if 6 of us came forward that would work out to volunteering twice. You might enjoy it enough to want more. It will also be an opportunity to spread the word about our organization, our website, our oral histories, books about warden times and adventures with animals, tourists and the bureaucracy.

The Whyte Museum

The Museum accepted our offer of Bill Browne's chaps, spurs and horse bell. Steve Malins, Banff's current Cultural Resource Manager, has arranged for all the warden cabin logbooks in his archives to be transferred to the Whyte Museum where the bulk of them is now to be found. We are also offering a woman's warden tunic. They apparently don't have one so this item should be of interest.

The museum sends its thanks to the PWSAS for being ongoing Museum members. The Museum is particularly grateful during hard times like these

Mini-Re-Unions or Spring and Fall Get-Togethers.

The idea is to hold these do's at a park campground in the Spring and Fall before they get busy (or overwhelmed as they have recently). There was one such event held in Waterton several years ago that was successful and the proposal is to carry on like that starting next Spring. New director Alan Westhaver is leading the charge here and you can send your suggestions on campgrounds or other related matters to Al at alan.westhaver@shaw.ca.

Celebration of the Life of Johnny Nylund: (Mar 6th, 1938-Sept 17th, 2020).

Covid-19 restrictions scuttled the family's wishes for a public celebration of Johnny's life and so were replaced by a family memorial with 28 people attending. On a beautiful Friday morning, September 17th, the family group of 9 found itself alone at the summit of Square Butte where they quietly scattered Johnny's ashes on a sunny slope and then toasted him with a shot of scotch which grandson Clayton has been saving for almost one year for this very purpose. They then returned to the Chinook Ranch to join the rest of the family. The ranch is where Johnny's beautiful



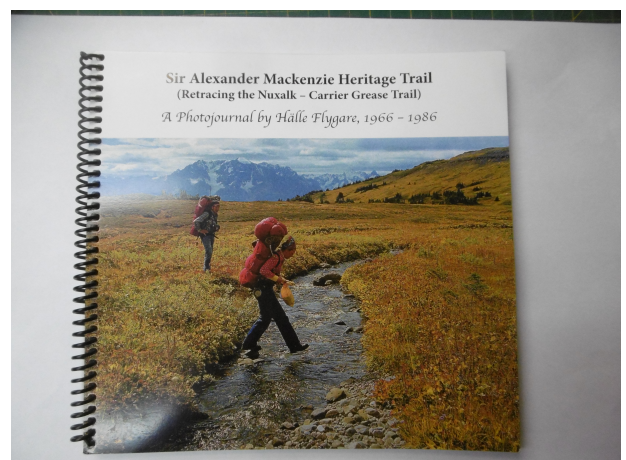
memorial bench, made by Frank Burstrom, is located. The family could not have asked for a better day – the weather was beautiful, the scenery spectacular and Johnny well remembered.

Marie is still hoping that a public celebration can be held at some point in the future, maybe in the form of an informal social gathering to share stories and memories.

On the Book Front

Halle Flygare has brought out a new book, *Sir Alexander Mackenzie Heritage Trail: Retracing the Nuxalk-Carrier Grease Trail*. The book's author worked for the Banff Warden Service from 1972 – 1990. He was hardly seen there for much of that time he had been seconded to work restoring one of Canada's first National Historic Trails.

This 100 page photo-journal has more than 150 photographs of the spectacular landscapes the trail passes through, old trapper cabins and remote ranches and lodges. It includes photo and word



portraits of Fraser Plateau pioneers and natives, many gone now, whom Halle and Linda met or worked with.

The Grease Trail was used by the Dakelh (Carrier) people, who travelled from the Fraser Plateau to the Bella Coola Valley to trade for eulachon grease with the Nuxalk tribe. Eulachon was a fish oil the natives used in cooking and for healing purposes. Historically it is significant in being the route used to complete the first crossing of the North American continent when in July, 1793, with guidance from the Dakelh, Alexander Mackenzie and his Northwest Company voyageurs abandoned their attempt to descend the Fraser River and took to the grease trail and reached the Pacific.

Halle first learned about the trail in 1973 when coming across traces of it while guiding a party of Swedish moose hunters on the Fraser Plateau. By then the trail had all but disappeared, and was on track to do so, when Halle took on its resurrection. After selling the idea to Parks Canada, Halle and his wife Linda spent most of the next decade piecing together remnants of the old grease trail and working on its restoration. The now completely restored trail is 347 km. long, signed and mapped. The book's maps serve as a useful guide for planning a trip over this unique long-distance trail.

Halle's knowledge of nature and interest in native history come out strongly in this book as does his skill as a landscape, wildlife and wildflower photographer (he is co-author and photographer of the best-selling *Wildflowers of the Canadian Rockies*). Adding to the book's appeal are quotes from Mackenzie's 1793 *Journal* and from early surveyors who followed in his footsteps.

Copies of Halle's *Photojournal* are available at Canmore's Café Books. If you like it Halle is planning several more like it on this historic trail. He is (tirelessly) also at work on one on Alexander Mackenzie's canoe voyage from Grand Portage, Minnesota to the Fraser River where he started his trek to Bella Coola and the Pacific.

New Member

Dan Cressman served in Banff National Park as a Seasonal Park Warden in the mid-1970's under Chief Park Warden Andy Anderson. He worked with Bill Vroom, Joe Halstenson, Jimmy Deegan, Tim Auger, Lance Cooper, Rick Kunelius, Keith Everts & Sid Marty. He decided to join the Alumni Association as he has many good memories of working alongside those great people.

Some Social News

Vinton Lovell is the new Ya Ha Tinda Ranch Manager. He has 15 years with Parks Canada. He came with lots of experience with horses and bison from working in Elk Island NP. The PWSAS wishes him success in this position

Congratulations to Rick & Jean Smith on their retirement. Jean and Rick are settling in well to their new digs. They plan visit the Bighorn Campground at the Ya-Ha-Tinda next summer.

Happy Birthday Larry. Recently there was a family celebration of Larry's 80th birthday.

Dan Graham is retiring this December. His virtual retirement ceremony poster has been emailed out. In addition, we'd like to invite you to contribute some words or photos to his Kudoboard: <https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/el1jVrsu>. Lucas Habib has been tasked with putting together a quiz for the party. He is asking if any Alumni have any good stories about Dan from his Warden days (or later) that I could turn into quiz questions. Lucas will also accept great photos if there are any floating around! Please send your stories to lucas.habib@pc.gc.ca

Stats on the PWSAS Website.

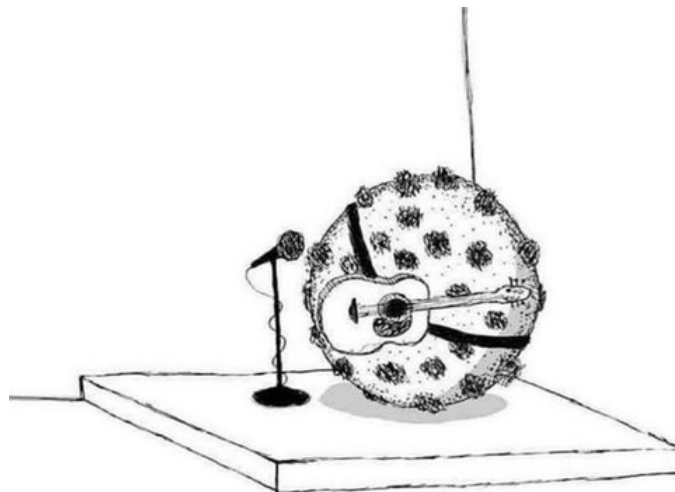
Our Oral Histories are very popular as the number of views (up to the start of Oct.) shows; Art Cochrane's interview - 1166 views; Dave Norcross - 1050 views, Tom Elliot - 428; Paul Kutzer - 423; Dale Portman and Katy Calvert - 405; and Don & Grace Mickle - 364.

Music, Music or “The Wardens” – from Scott Ward.

The Wardens are ramping up after over a years break due to Covid. They played a show at The Radiant in Banff to a sold out house. It was the first opportunity to play some of the new songs off their new record "Sold Out at the Ironwood "which was produced during Covid. The record was produced by Juno award winning producer Russell Broom in Calgary and contains 10 new original songs as well as two tracks recorded live at the Calgary Folk Club. Records can be ordered from their website at thewardensmusic.com. The record has received two nominations, one for the Calgary Music Awards for folk song of the year and one from the Canadian Folk Music Awards for Ray Schmidt for his work on three songs contained in the album.

There has been some changes to the band. Bradley Bischoff has stepped down after ten years with the band. Brad was a huge part of the Wardens sound and worked tirelessly to get the band off the ground. His song writing and singing/guitar playing will be missed for sure. Ray and Scott have decided to carry on and our fiddler of the past three years Scott Duncan has stepped up to the plate singing harmonies and playing mandolin and standup bass as well as his masterful fiddling. At present John Cronin has joined the band. John lives in Invermere and was Ian Tyson’s lead guitarist for seven years.

The band is currently booked for two tours in BC in the spring of 2022. In March five shows are booked in major theatres in Burns Lake, Smithers,, Quesnel, Kitimat and Prince Rupert. In May they are playing at the Dream Cafe in Penticton, Studio 64 in Kimberley and Wings over the Rockies in Invermere. Hopefully Covid will allow all of this to happen. Hopefully you can catch them at a show near you in the coming year.



"This one's dedicated to all the people that didn't believe in me when I was getting started."

.....

100 years ago everyone owned a horse and only the rich had cars.

Today, everyone has a car and only the rich have horses.

Oh how the stables have turned!