



# Newsletter

## SPRING 2018

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## 53<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the **OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN PARKS SOCIETY**

### Droughts, Floods & Other Shapes of Water

Our Lakes, Watersheds  
& the State of Our Water

#### AGENDA

- ✓ Election of Directors
- ✓ Financial Report
- ✓ Business Meeting
- ✓ Recognition of Pioneers:  
Doreen Adams and Sheila White

## CENTRE STAGE THEATRE

in the Summerland Secondary School on Main St.

Friday, April 20, 2018 • 7pm

ALL WELCOME Refreshments NO CHARGE Donations Welcome

## Editorial

It has been a busy winter for the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society. Directors have been involved in issues of water, forestry, land use and education regarding trail restoration and development, as well as supporting the National Park Coalition. As you are aware, part of the function of the OSPS is to monitor the lands, practices and policies which are critical to current and future parks. With this in mind the editorial for this issue will be a kind of potpourri of topics.

One of our local MPs, Dan Albas of the Conservatives, recently sent out a nice little calendar depicting animals of Canada and notes about range, size and other snippets of information. What the calendar did not contain was information about where the animal was located on the list of endangered species. In the diet section it indicated if they were carnivorous, omnivore or herbivore but not what fauna or flora were part of the typical diet. Population numbers were not included so the range maps were rendered vague. Thank you to Mr. Albas for the nice little calendar but if politicians are distributing information on some of our national resources please make them relevant.

Recently on the CBC radio station's The Next Chapter was a discussion on de-extinction and rewilding. These topics were connected to some books that were being reviewed. The host and the 'columnist' were discussing the

*Continued on next page...*

Please use the enclosed membership form on the back page to help us carry out our mission.

pros and cons of each and found that there were often unintended consequences for each, both positive and negative. One of the points made that needs to be shared is that if resources are stewarded correctly in the first instance then there is no need to have to 're' introduce or establish anything. And make no mistake with the presence of human interaction with the world we are now in a stewardship position with all of our flora and fauna. Timber acquisition, water use, recreational areas and numerous other human activities impact our local regional environment. We need to consider the consequences of each as local governments, organizations and individuals set out to change or alter existing areas. We need not only conserve and stop depletion from occurring but return our environment to the way that it existed for thousands of years. Thank you The Next Chapter for a great discussion.

This year's AGM, scheduled for Friday, April 20, in Summerland's Centre Stage Theatre at 7:00 p.m., will be focusing on Water. Have you considered the links between timber harvest, the subsequent changes in hydrology, watershed run off and lake levels? These are some of the connections that the OSPS has been examining and hope to report on

at the AGM. We will present the The River, a film recently released by the Okanagan Basin Water Board and present displays and discussion to putting the recent flooding and other events into context. Please join us. Information is on the poster on page one.

Also, with the advent of our Annual General Meeting soon upon us, it is time once again to recognize some of the early pioneers of the OSPS. The Parks Society is over fifty years in existence and it is thanks to our early members that parks and other areas have been preserved and/or restricted or regulated to the benefit of all. We certainly 'stand on the shoulders of giants' as we do the work of the society. Our membership has been responsible for, or involved with others in, the setting aside of land for parks all up and down the south Okanagan and the Similkameen. Okanagan Mountain Park, Vaseaux Lake Park, the Brent Mountain protected area and many fields and forests throughout the region are the result of efforts, shared or alone, by the OSPS. Numerous trails, historical signs and checkpoints, including the HBC Brigade Trail, have benefited from our memberships contributions of volunteer labour and other resources. So we say thank you to the efforts of our early pioneers and formally recognize a couple annually at this time of the year. Without their trail-blazing and guidance, the Society may not exist and certainly our

region would be the worst for it.

Well it appears that the Banks Crescent project in Summerland has been stopped. Focused public opinion resulted in the town council voting 'nay' on approval to go ahead. From a conservation point of view this is good news. There was danger of sloughing banks, endangerment of the stream and subsequently the viability of the fish hatchery, and, not as well publicized, the very real concerns of exposing radiation that was detected in this hill-side over thirty years ago (we ran an article in this newsletter last year).

Similarly the public in Peachland raised concerns and awareness a couple of months ago when a great crowd attended a council meeting to display opposition to a proposed local multi-story building just off of the beach. Peachland also has had a very active group investigating the local watershed and the timber cutting practices being employed.

It is great to see the public becoming involved in issues when they detect that they may not have been clearly considered from a perspective other than economics. The OSPS will continue to be involved in such issues. Should you wish to be involved please see the membership registration form elsewhere in this newsletter.

## South Okanagan mourning the loss of well-known cherry farmer

BY DALE BOYD  
*Penticton Herald*

**T**he South Okanagan is mourning the loss of a political advocate for the land and agriculture. Greg Norton died Saturday at the age of 65 while in Mexico for a wedding, the Oliver Daily News reported Monday.

Norton was an Oliver fruit farmer, former president of the Okanagan Cherry Growers Association (now called the BC

Cherry Association) for nearly a decade, Oliver director for the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen and a member of the B.C. Agriculture Land Commission.

"He was an energetic, intelligent, hardworking, outgoing leader in many different fields during his life," said Graem Nelson, a personal friend and board secretary during Norton's tenure as president of the cherry association.

Norton promoted research into cherry growing in the Okanagan Valley and later helped the export industry become what it is today, Nelson said.

"He included people, he delegated well, he did a good job of giving us lots of pep talks and imparting enthusiasm," Nelson said.

A fruit farmer in Oliver since the late '80s, Norton was a true man of the land. A hunter and fisherman, he also raised cattle for fun, but was just as conformable in political office.

"He practised what he preached and, to me, that was really important. I had the pleasure of working with him at the regional district. He was frank, he was up front and he made a big, big difference," said Penticton MLA Dan Ashton. He leaves a lasting legacy in the agricultural and political realms, Ashton added.

"He was an absolute stalwart on his opinion on the national park. Whether people agreed or disagree, he was always up front and said it like it is. That was one of the places we agreed to disagree on," Ashton said.



## OSPS PIONEERS:

# Sheila White

Sheila White is a current and long-time director with the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society. She has been active in the society for more than four decades, since taking part in the Okanagan mountain campaign, making her one of the longest serving OSPS pioneer members. Along with her deceased husband Bert, Sheila has served in many of the society's administrative posts, including secretary, editor of the newsletter, a variety of committees and, overall convener and historian. Today, still a director at the age of 94, Sheila holds the membership portfolio and is active in the society's day-to-day functioning.

Over the time that Sheila has been an OSPS member, she has also served 18 years on Summerland council, been a prolific letter writer and community activist. Unsurprising to anyone that knows her, her areas of responsibilities on the councils included agriculture, water and libraries. Her interests in nature and conservation are long standing.

Sheila was born on March 12, 1924 in Cranbrook, B.C. She attended secondary school in Kerrisdale, and attended the University of British Columbia as a seventeen year old, but left after two years to join the Airforce, and do her 'duty' for the war effort, in 1943. She served in Montreal and Glace Bay until World War II ended. Prior to 1943 at U.B.C. Sheila was an 'Aggie' as she was enrolled in Agriculture and was active in

the 'VOC' or Varsity Outdoors Club. After the war Sheila attended Normal School in Victoria and became a physical Education teacher.

After a short engagement, Sheila married Bert White (born February 5, 1926 in Cloverdale, B.C.) in December of 1955. Bert, who passed away in 2016, was a teacher who was also very active in the OSPS. Since Sheila had done her teaching practicum in Penticton and enjoyed the area, Bert applied for and obtained his own teaching job there. They moved to the Lake City where they began a family. Bert and Sheila settled in the Trout Creek area of Summerland 60 years ago. Living in the same house that Sheila still occupies, they raised three children and in turn were a central influence for twelve grandchildren.

Sheila has been active in OSPS campaigns to ensure that lands were purchased by various nonprofit entities in order to provide a corridor through the south Okanagan for migrating wildlife. She has also seen to it that connections and communications with other conservation and pro-environmental groups are maintained. Her great wealth of knowledge about the history of the region and the society is fundamental to many decisions that have been and are made by the directors. In 2013 Sheila, and co-author Bill Johnson, wrote a history of the OSPS entitled Preserving Our Natural and Cultural Heritage that was published in the 77th annual report of the Okanagan Historical Society and can be found on our website: [www.okanagansimilkameenparkssociety.ca](http://www.okanagansimilkameenparkssociety.ca)



*Sheila White, at mile zero on the Chilkoot trail in Dyea, Alaska last summer (2017). Sheila walked a small part of the Chilkoot trail here and at Bennett on the Yukon side to commemorate her father, Henry B Hicks, journey over this route on his way to the Klondike gold rush in 1898, 119 years before.*

*Several people along the way remarked that she is possibly one the last remaining offspring of someone who completed that trek carrying their 1 ton of supplies to Lake Bennett. Her dad overwintered there and built a raft and floated down to the Klondike the following spring. But that's another story.*

*Wetlands are important to the balance of the ecosystem. However when it gets too wet (or too dry) the ecosystem is stressed and has difficulty functioning in the manner that it has. The Okanagan Similkameen has many ecosystems that contribute to the wonderful larger system that we all know.*



### Policy, Standards and Communication Contribute to the Bike and Hike Path

BY BILL JOHNSTON · 2010

#### O.S.P.S., TRAILS AND WILDERNESS COMMITTEE

I have been asked to provide some background to the announcement of a separated hike and bike trail from the north end of Osoyoos Lake to Road 22, parallel to the four-lane highway construction now underway in this area. Originally there were only plans for a two metre wide walking path to replace the K.V.R. rail / trail bed at that location. The Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen raised concerns in late April about the inadequacy of this plan for such a narrow trail that had no provision for two way hike and bike traffic. A meeting in M.L.A. John Slater's office on June 4, 2010, provided R.D.O.S. representatives from the area, Osoyoos Mayor Wells, and Okanagan

Similkameen Parks Society director John Bremmer (involved since 1985 with the International Hiking and Biking Society) and me the opportunity to put forward and discuss improvements to the original proposal for the path.

The O.S.P.S. Trails Committee file contains the Ministry of Transportation and Highways cycle guides from 1992 and 2000. These editions of the guide, which were shared with the meeting, indicate that it is ministry policy to provide hike and bike paths to accompany new highway construction. We were also able to inform those present of trail width references from the policy guide and from a 20-year-old standard established by the B.C. Bicycle Association. While these standards call for a minimum three metre wide for a trail or path, they suggest that an adequate width is four metres, in order to ensure that two-way traffic is accommodated on trails such as the one that was under discussion.

We would like to express our appreciation for the effort, and subsequent results, put forward by M.L.A. John Slater, in order to

secure this hike and bike path. John Bremmer and I see the application of the M.O.T.H. policy to this project as a precedent for future highway construction projects. This policy, and the precedent of this path, should ensure that all future highway construction plans provide for hike and bike path construction at the time of highway construction.

In the near term concerted efforts will be made to connect Road 22 with Road 9 with a two-way hike and bike path. Road 9 is located at the south end of the paved path on either side of Oliver. This wonderful, paved path was a project of the International Hiking and Biking Society. Mid-term efforts will be directed at connecting Oliver with Penticton using the Kettle Valley Railway right-of-way between these two points. One longer, term proposal calls for a circle route for hiking and biking, connecting Osoyoos, Oliver and Penticton with Myra Canyon and Midway. The circle would be completed with a Midway back to Osoyoos leg. This path would likely mostly be via the existing railway right-of-way.

### Pro-Park Petition Closes with 644 More Names than Rival Anti-Park Petition

RICHARD MCGUIRE  
*Osoyoos Times*

A surge of signatures in the closing days of a petition supporting a national park reserve in the South Okanagan pushed the final number to 1,546.

The electronic petition was initiated through the House of Commons by Doreen Olson, coordinator of the South Okanagan Similkameen National Park Network (SOSNPN). Olson is from the Kaleden area.

The cutoff date for signatures was Friday at 8:37 a.m. B.C. time – four months after the petition was launched at the end of November.

The number of signatures was 644 more than

a rival petition opposing the park, which started and closed two weeks earlier and gathered 902 signatures.

That e-petition was launched by Oliver-area gun seller and enthusiast Tony Iannella.

Asked about the surge of support as the deadline drew near, Olson said there “was a little push.”

“We reminded people that the petition was ending and if they hadn’t signed, that they should sign,” said Olson.

Iannella’s petition was presented in the House of Commons by MP Richard Cannings, who said he also intends to present Olson’s. Her petition is currently awaiting certification by House of Commons personnel.

Olson said the 644-signature margin between the two petitions didn’t surprise her because more people support than oppose a national park reserve.

“I think that’s pretty consistent with all the other polls and petitions,” she said.

Both petitions gathered most of their support from B.C., but each had some support from outside the province.

Olson’s petition collected 1,431 B.C. signatures, 42 from Ontario and 34 from Alberta. Support from other provinces was in the single digits and there were four who signed from outside Canada.

Her petition cites the benefits of a national park reserve to the region and calls on the Government of Canada “to expedite the creation of the South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park Reserve.”



## NOTES FROM THE PAST

### Okanagan Water Study to be Launched Friday

OKANAGAN IN BRIEF – MARCH 2010

**B**oundary-Similkameen MLA John Slater will help launch the Okanagan Basin Water Board's water supply and demand project at a ceremony in Kelowna

on Friday. The three-year study will take a comprehensive look at water availability throughout the Valley and includes an analysis of how the Okanagan water supply could be affected by climate change.

"We believe that this project will be a learning resource for all watersheds in our province," Slater said. Slater, a former chairman of the water board, spoke in the legislature on Monday to raise awareness of water issues and acknowledge World Water Day. He said an estimated 1.1 billion people in the world rely on unsafe drinking water sources.

The provincial government is looking for input into ways to update the Water Act, established in 1909, the province's primary water legislation.

### Letter to Hon Barry Penner, Minister of Environment

APRIL 15, 2010

#### RE: MOUNTAIN CARIBOU SURVIVAL

**O**ur Society with many others is concerned about the plight of BC's Mountain Caribou. First and foremost, without habitat the caribou cannot survive. Clear cut logging is not only a great disturbance but also cuts off a crucial part of caribou food supply. Therefore it must not be permitted in critical areas. The simplistic reaction that killing wolves will somehow save the caribou is unrealistic. Wolves are predators and under normal circumstances would help to keep the herds healthy. Some wolf

kill may be needed to relieve pressure on the present caribou population, but predators are an important part of the ecology... sees reintroduction of wolves into Yellowstone Park.

We in no way support shooting from helicopters. Such behaviour is hard on all wildlife and is indiscriminate in its targets. Mining, snowmobile and heli-skiing activities have access to a considerable area over-all. Again, these disturbances lead to more stress on an already threatened species. Hunting Bag limits in BC seem to be more based on "business" than on due care regarding each species. Bag limits should always reflect specific care and need for control.

The caribou scientist team has done a good deal of investigative work. More attention and weight to their findings would be helpful. In closing, may I repeat that unless there is a safe and sufficient habitat, there is little hope for a valuable BC species.

We encourage everyone to let the Minister of the Environment know how you feel about this issue.



*The roadsides, sidewalks and beaches, not to mention homes and yards, along Okanagan Lake were eroded in the spring of 2017 as a result of the flooding that occurred. Did the hydrological safety net of the surrounding watersheds develop a hole which contributed to the flooding?*



*All over the Okanagan Similkameen, and other regions of B.C., there are pockets of non-potable water where there should be clean fresh water. Sometimes these situations come and go. Is this a sign of things to come?*

WE OFFER YOU A LITTLE HISTORY:

# Excerpts from the Submission to the BC Government's Review of "Professional Reliance in Natural Resources"

BY WILL KOOP

Coordinator, BC Tap Water Alliance

JANUARY 19, 2018

**W**ith the evolution of federal and state governments and institutions in North America (focusing on Canada and the United States) since the late 1800s, the struggles and debates over physical resource extractions and developments on public and private lands continue. Applicable laws, generated through public concerns and from resource studies, which have been presented to and debated by political structures and institutions, have fundamentally shaped this history complex.

The late 1960s and early 1970s witnessed a revolution toward the first comprehensive implementations of land use planning, with the Canadian federal and provincial governments establishing their own Ministry of Environments. These initiatives in Canada blossomed as similar revolutionary land use planning initiatives took shape in the United States, particularly a law under the 1969 *National Environmental Policy Act* requiring Environmental Impact Statements and Assessments which subsequently triggered hundreds of resource study reports and planning processes, through which government agencies hired reams of resource professionals.

The first elaborate and meaningful structure for public accountability by the BC government for land use planning and public involvement came about in April 1971 through the enactment of the *Environment and Land Use Act* by the Social Credit government (1952-1972). Hansard (March 23, 1971) records that Social Credit MLA George Mussallem heralded the revolutionary Act as the "Magna Carta of the ecology." On January 27, 1971, R.G. Williston, Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, stated the following (in Hansard):

*This is the first time in Canada that an attempt has been made to bring together all of the responsible administrative areas and agencies within the Provincial administration to assist in the*

*development of co-ordinated Crown land use policies. This [Environment and Land Use Committee] is the strongest committee of Government and its representation encompasses the resource managers and human disciplines. With the evolution of federal, and state governments and institutions in North America (focussing on Canada and the United States) since the late 1800s the struggles and debates over physical resource extractions and developments on public and private lands continue. Applicable laws, generated through public concerns and from resource studies, which have been presented to and debated by political structures and institutions, have fundamentally shaped this history complex.*

The late 1960s and early 1970s witnessed a revolution toward the first comprehensive implementations of land use planning, which, in total, control the quality of the environment.

*This Environment and Land Use Act... [is] designed to bring about public interest and a degree of public involvement because, as already has been stated in the House, both of them are matters of actual concern and actual operation at the present time. To indicate the serious intention of the Government concerning these matters, it was decided to codify them in 6 Statutes, and the activities and the functions of the Environmental and Land Use Committee are contained in the Environment and Land Use Act. Really, Mr. Speaker, this spells out the basic philosophy that, if we are going to have an environment in British Columbia of which we'll all be proud, it's going to involve the act of participation of just about everyone who lives in the Province of British Columbia. Unless you do this and unless we, as individuals in British Columbia, as a people and as individuals, make this a matter of our everyday life, then, we're never going to have the type of environment that we would wish in the future.*

*The main feature of this act is that before lands are alienated and before projects are developed, they shall be subject to public scrutiny to see if in fact, they can be established without basic detriment to the environment. For the first time,*

*public hearings are called for and, if you will notice, at those public hearings, prior to the public hearing, an overall investigation of the effects of the proposed development will have been the subject of study, and that expert opinion provision is made for providing expert opinion for carrying out research in advance of the hearing to make that evidence available at the public hearing, so the people will have, not only their own opinions, but expert opinions, at the same time, by which they may indicate whether they are in favour or not in favour of a development proceeding and, if this development does proceed, of the basic precautions which have to be taken by that development as it is carried out.*

The Environment and Land Use Committee of Deputy Ministers, and a Secretariat, "a standing committee of Cabinet," 1 authorized environmental processes, reviews, and studies. The legislation was applied to a prominent issue at that time, the Tsitika watershed on northeast Vancouver Island, where 288,261 acres of forest lands were placed under immediate moratorium against forest licensing, while resource professionals conducted wildlife, fish, water and ecology resource studies. Amongst the hiring of research scientists, the incoming NDP administration (1972-1975) had resource staff engage in widespread committee planning structures, involving the participations of regional governments, local governments, and stakeholders.

It was during this initial operational phase of the *Environment and Land Use Act* that a review of BC's community watersheds was created, and is when the Deputy Ministers authorized this Task Force (1972-1980) to implement legal protections over community watersheds as former Section 12 Map Reserves under the Land Act.

With the return of the Social Credit Party administration (December 1976 - September 1991), it began to dissolve or water down the *Environment and Land Use Act*, as well as removing the moratorium and ignoring research reports for the Tsitika watershed. Under a new Cabinet Committee structure,



# South Okanagan Similkameen National Park Update

**T**wo sides are now fighting for and against a proposal for the South Okanagan National Park Reserve.

Members of the Central Okanagan Naturalists Club were recently presented with a summary prepared by Doreen Olson from the South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park Network (SOSNPN).

Parks advocates in the South Okanagan Similkameen welcomed Oct. 27 announcement that the provincial, federal and First Nation governments had agreed to work together to establish a national park reserve, she said.

Park opponents have banded together to form the South Okanagan Similkameen Preservation Society (SOSPS). Their first order of business is “to stop the implementation of a National Park in the South Okanagan,” Olson said.

They’ve launched a Facebook page and Parliamentary petition.

The park advocates have also launched a parliamentary petition. Theirs calls on the

federal government to expedite the creation of the national park reserve.

“This petition is doing well, but we need everyone who supports the park to add their name and to share the link to the petition with like-minded friends. The petition is open for signatures until the end of March, but the earlier you sign it the better,” she said.

The link is: [petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-1390](https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-1390)

The OSOONPN website ([sosnationalpark.com](http://sosnationalpark.com)) also has a link to the petition, which can only be signed once and will be verified by the Parliamentary Clerk of Petitions.

“As for letters, it would be best to write to (B.C. Environment and Climate Change) Minister (George) Heyman and (Federal Environment and Climate Change) Minister (Catherine) McKenna.

“We find that there is faster response to an email. Please ask that responses be cc’d to your MP and MLA especially is Stephen Fuhr is your representative,” as he is very

supportive,” she said.

Olson suggests emailing:

Heyman: [env.minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:env.minister@gov.bc.ca)

Kelowna-Lake Country MP Fuhr: [Stephen.Fuhr@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Fuhr@parl.gc.ca)

South Okanagan-West Kootney MP Richard Cannings: [Richard.Cannings@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Richard.Cannings@parl.gc.ca)

Central Okanagan-Similkameen-Nicola MP Dan Albas: [Dan.Albas@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Dan.Albas@parl.gc.ca)

Kelowna-Mission MLA Steve Thomson: [steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:steve.thomson.mla@leg.bc.ca)

Kelowna-Lake Country MLA Norm Letnick: [norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:norm.letnick.mla@leg.bc.ca)

Kevin McNamee (director, parks establishment, Park Canada): [kevin.mcnamee@pc.gc.ca](mailto:kevin.mcnamee@pc.gc.ca)

*J.P. Squire, aka the Ski Sheriff, is a retired Okanagan Weekend reporter and an avid outdoors enthusiast. Email: [jp.squire@telus.net](mailto:jp.squire@telus.net)*

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the Economic Development Committee supplanted the coordination and policy roles of the Environment and Land Use Committee. In September 1980 the Social Credit administration disbanded the ELUC Secretariat. In other words, the ELUC prize stallion, the “Magna Carta,” was not only ‘put out to pasture,’ but was then locked inside a sound-proof barn stall.

In 1978, Council of Forests Industry’s vice-chairman, Mike Apsey, was appointed Deputy Minister of Forests for the newly formed Ministry of Forests. Under Apsey’s controversial captainship, came a host of controversial episodes. During this period, Cabinet introduced British Columbia’s first Ministry of Deregulation, headed by car salesman MLA Evan Wolfe.

Under a new sympathetic regime headed by the Ministry of Forests, which became the

lead agency over other resource Ministries, came great public criticism and opposition. Despite warnings from international climate scientists to the world’s governments against large-scale removal of forest lands to aid in limiting the steady annual increased rates of atmospheric carbon dioxide emissions, vast tracks of BC’s public lands were clearcut and roaded, while government downsized ministerial resource staff.

After about the first term in office (post-1980), the public’s reliance upon resource professionals within government became subjugated, controlled and curtailed for the financial benefits of the private resource sector. It was linked to an elaborate scheme by the BC’s forest industry collective (the Council of Forest Industries, the Cariboo Lumber Manufacturers Association, the Interior Lumber Manufacturers Association, the Northern Interior Lumber Sector), to

reorganize forest resource laws and regulations. The scheme was presented in a “confidential” 12-page submission to Premier Bill Bennett in July 1983, *Forest Industry Proposals for Cost-Effective Forest Management*. The submission included 21 recommendations. In a cover letter by D.L. McInnes, Chairman of the Council of Forest Industry’s Special Committee on Cost-Effective Administration, it recommended government “decentralize the decision-making authority for forest management more effectively, and structure the Ministry [of Forests] to make it smaller and more cost-effective,” and to “delegate responsibility and accountability fully to licensees in line with their existing and suggested additional contractual obligations, subject to government audit of results.”

How is this working out for you?

# A Memorial for the Long Time Okanagan Environmental Activist Gwen Barlee

The Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society is pleased to announce that it has contributed funds for the purchase of a tree to memorialize the Okanagan conservationist and activist, Gwen Barlee. The tree will be planted during a ceremony at Memorial Park in Summerland on Friday, May 18 at 10:30 a.m. – 11:30. The 'Welcome Host' will be Doreen Olson, Chair of the South Okanagan National Park Coalition among other roles in the environmental movement. Speakers will include Bob Peart and a representative of the Wilderness Committee. A special guest at the ceremony will be Kathleen (Kyle) Barlee (Gwen's Mom). Coffee and refreshments will be served.

Barlee, 54, died on Thursday, June 22, 2017 after a year-long battle with cancer. Patricia Gwen Barlee was born on March 29, 1963. She was the second of three girls born to her hard working mother Kathleen Kyle and one of the OSPS's celebrated early pioneers, Neville Langrell (Bill) Barlee. Gwen was born in Penticton, and grew up in Summerland. She leaves her sisters, Veronica Barlee and Diane Barlee; her mother, Kathleen Kyle; and a niece, Laura Barlee-Morris.

Gwen came by her activism early in life. She once explained to the Georgia Straight that "There's over, like, 250 species of birds that nest in the South Okanagan. So when I'd go on trips with my dad, who at that time was



*Gwen Barlee, Activist, Environmentalist, Leader. She will be missed.*

involved in mining...I remember seeing the incredible diversity of birds...And then when we go by Keremeos, then you'd see the mountain goats, and then when you'd be going by Vaseux Lake, you'd see the mountain sheep."

A policy director with the Wilderness Committee at the time of her passing, Gwen was known for her research skills and her ability to back up her claims. Gwen proved a savvy user of Freedom of Information laws which enabled her to scour reams of documents to unearth hidden or unnoticed facts.

In 2005, she embarrassed the provincial government by revealing that a controversial plan to put parking meters in provincial parks was costing more money than it raised. She was with the Wilderness Committee since 2001, first as a forest campaigner and then as national policy director. Recently, she was working on the campaign for a South Okanagan National Park, where she hoped to see significant developments in the near future.



*Small creeks and streams exist all over our region. However they can only handle a portion of the run off, especially in a spring like 2017. Forests help to use the water and assist with the slow melt to spread out the amount of water runoff during a given period.*



## OSPS PIONEERS:

# Doreen Adams

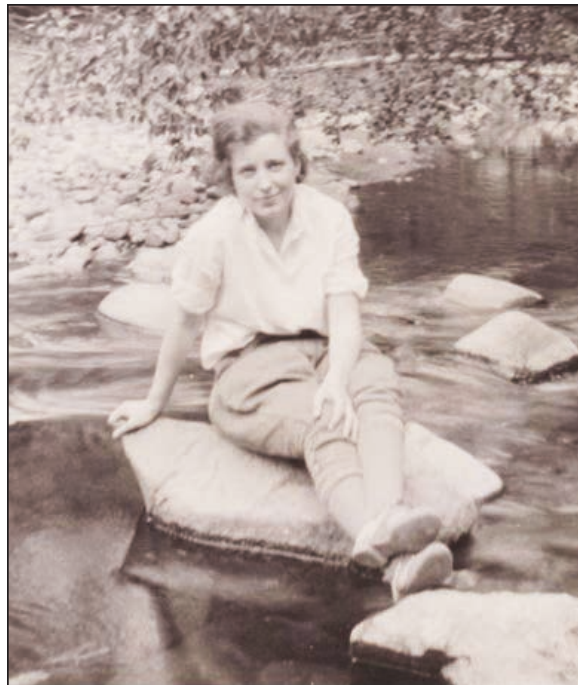
One of the pioneers of the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society that we are recognizing at this year's Annual General Meeting is Doreen Adams. Doreen was born in Britain in 1902 into the Milsom family. Along with the rest of the family, she arrived in Canada sailing on the 'Pretorian' in 1911. They landed at Quebec City but soon departed for Brandon, Manitoba by way of Montreal.

She was educated in both public and private schools in Saskatchewan. When Doreen completed secondary school she enrolled in teachers' training at the Regina College. She began teaching in a small prairie school (unnamed), and then moved on to Redvers, Saskatchewan. Doreen also taught at two first nations residential schools; the first was the File Hills school in Balcarres and then at the Coqualeetza school in Sardis, British Columbia.

Apparently Doreen had a deep interest in first nations' culture and its preservation. Evidence from short stories and poems that she authored indicate a respect and appreciation for the first nations' people and their traditional involvement in the environment. This may have been one of the entry points to her beliefs in conservation.

Doreen met and married Irvine Clinton Adams and they settled in Summerland. The home which they occupied was on the site of the current Adams Bird Sanctuary on Peach Orchard Road in Summerland. Through the efforts of their nephew Brian, the property for the sanctuary was donated to the town of Summerland. Today it is a wild patch of property with a creek and paths running through it and home to many species of birds.

At 95 years of age, Doreen passed away in 1995. She was predeceased by her husband Irvine (1902 – 1992) who painted many scenes depicting Okanagan Mountain which Doreen had been instrumental in having designated a park. Throughout her life, Doreen was involved in conservation, artistic endeavors and 'contest'. Through sponsored contests, often regarding writing, Doreen won, among other prizes, a Barracuda automobile, a fur



*Doreen Adams on the Adams' property, where she and Irvine lived, on Peach Orchard Road in lower Summerland. Doreen was an energetic and dedicated pioneer member of the OSPS.*

coat and a refrigerator. She corresponded, generally on matters of conservation and national unity, with a number of provincial and national political leaders. These correspondents include Jean Chretien, Lucien Bouchard, Gary Filman, Paul Martin, Sheila Copps and Catherine Callbeck, the premier of Prince Edward Island.

## A Pioneer Remembers Another Pioneer

BY SHEILA WHITE

Doreen Adams was an original member of the Okanagan Similkameen Parks Society. With her husband Irvine, a gifted landscape artist, she had visited many areas in the South Okanagan. When the OSPS decided not only to nominate, but also to work vigorously for, the Okanagan Mountain to become a provincial park, Doreen became chair of that committee.

She was a formidable proponent of the park. She invited knowledgeable people – all OSPS members—to join in this endeavour. (Ted Dodd, of Kelowna, was a businessman there.

John Kitson, of Summerland, was an avid sailor who wished to establish a harbor of refuge by the island; Victor Wilson, of Naramata, used his wonderful oration skills to speak to many groups; Leon Blumer, a climber, looked at Dead Horse Canyon and other sites; John Woodworth, Bert Kemsey and others, made up this incredible group.)

Plans were made. Letters were written. Doreen was in touch with everyone. She led the committee as a coordinated group to obtain the first provincial park in the South Okanagan. Thus in 1972, Premier W.A.C. Bennett declared the large Okanagan Mountain area a provincial park.

With that accomplished the OSPS began working tirelessly on Brent Mountain, Cathedral Lakes and the Perilage Trail near Manning Park with the vision to protect them as parks or other conservation areas.

When power lines, which would have severely limited the work conducted at the as yet unprotected site of the Radio Astrophysical site, were proposed to be located in the White Lake area, Doreen stepped in to speak for the installation. She was convinced that the Radio Observatory, which was located on a carefully chosen, if vulnerable, area needed help. Doreen wrote more letters, this time mostly to Ottawa. However, in this instance time-lines were important, so the OSPS sent Doreen to Ottawa to make the case for the facility. She had a meeting with the Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau. The upshot was that her passionate plea was successful. The power lines were constructed beyond the line of sight (and unable to interfere with the telescopes) and the site was saved. It is now recognized world-wide for its important work.

Doreen Adams was a wonderful OSPS member and worker. She was endlessly charming and encouraging but with 'bulldog' tenacity. In addition, Doreen and Irvine also left a legacy for the Parks Society using a portion of the proceeds from Irvine's paintings to assist with future OSPS work.

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LEFT PHOTO – The property on which Doreen and Irvine Adams lived has been repurposed as a bird sanctuary. The Adam's Sanctuary is located on Peach Orchard Road in Summerland, just up the hill from the beach. Doreen had always hoped that the small patch of land could remain as a habitat for the local flora and fauna. With the creek and the uncultivated soil this sanctuary is not only a great home for birds but also a fitting tribute to the Adams' dedication to the environment of the Okanagan Similkameen.

TOP PHOTO – Follow the path into the sanctuary for a moment of respite and an opportunity to enjoy the birds and other creatures.