



THE CAIRN

Vol. 1, No. 4

Summer 1977

Published by the Peter Whyte Foundation, Box 160, Banff, Alberta, Canada

Peter Whyte — The War Years



Born at Banff in 1905, Peter Whyte was perhaps the first of Banff's native artists. His early interest in painting was encouraged by the guidance of Belmore Browne from whom he received his first instruction in art while still a schoolboy. His skill as a painter was further developed at the Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles, and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. It was there he met Catharine Robb, whom he married in 1930. Returning to Banff, Peter and Catharine set up a household and pursued their careers as artists.

When Canada went to war in September, 1939, it was only natural that Peter should apply for a position as a war artist. Unfortunately, no war artist program was immediately initiated and consequently he enlisted in the Banff Company of the Calgary Highlanders Reserve Army. Winter drill and training were conducted in Banff, while two-week summer sessions were spent at the Sarcee Base in Calgary.

On December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbour was bombed and recruits in the west were alerted to defend the roads and bridges of British Columbia. The Banff Company was ready to go, but they were not called upon nor were they activated to go overseas as they had expected. As a result, many of the Banff boys began to join the regular service, the majority enlisting in the Air Force. Peter applied to the R.C.A.F. for a position as a photographer but was turned down at this time because of his age and the fact that women were originally to occupy these positions.

Finally, in 1943 he read a notice that photographers were badly needed in the R.C.A.F. He immediately volunteered and commenced training at Manning Pool, located at the Exhibition Grounds in Edmonton. After about a month, he was posted to Sea Island near Vancouver and from there went to Pat Bay near Victoria. He was assigned to learn all



S.F.T.S. Calgary, 1943 by Peter Whyte

aspects of air force photography but soon found that most of his work involved photographing airmen's weddings.

A short time later Peter was transferred to Tofino, a bush station on the north-west coast of Vancouver Island. This was just after Estevan Point had been shelled by the Japanese, so as a precaution the photographic section had to be armed and drilled. At Tofino, he painted in his spare time and quickly won recognition from his C.O., who suggested he enter his work in the R.C.A.F. art competition. One painting, *Bush Station W.A.C.* was entered, but not until he reached his next posting at Jericho Beach in Vancouver, where he worked in the photography department copying maps, did he learn it had won second prize. Soon afterward he received his appointment as an official war artist and some hope of seeing action overseas.

Unfortunately, his hopes were frustrated. Preparatory to going overseas all war artists were transferred to bases closer to their families, where they were to paint for a month. Peter was stationed at Sarcee Flying Training Station in Calgary and also spent some time at Fort MacLeod. For one used to painting mountain and coastal scenery, runways and hangars had little attraction. Another irritation resulted from the fact that his paintings could not be detailed, since symbols, insignia and aircraft could not be exactly replicated because of security regulations.

The R.C.A.F. eventually sent him to Ottawa, where he was to make larger canvases from his sketches while awaiting his commission. It never came. Someone was mistakenly sent overseas instead of him and, growing discouraged, he asked to be discharged.

To illustrate Peter's war years, the Canadian War Museum has kindly consented to lend us his paintings from their collection. The exhibition, entitled *Peter Whyte — The War Years*, will be on view in the Peter Whyte Gallery from June 16 - July 17. Included in the show is his second-prize winner, *Bush Station W.A.C.*, along with works done at Calgary and Fort MacLeod.

The Cairn is published quarterly by the Peter Whyte Foundation, Box 160, Banff, Alberta, Canada. Editor: E.J. Hart
ISSN 0701-0281

Archives of the Canadian Rockies



Back to Banff Day 1976

It's quite something to see two old friends who haven't laid eyes on each other for twenty or thirty years meet again. That's what often happens at *Back to Banff Day*, the Archives of the Canadian Rockies' tea party and round-up held annually on Father's Day. At this time it is our pleasure to play host to those who have a love for the mountains and have spent some time living in them in order that they may gather to recall old times, swap reminiscences and renew acquaintances.

Back to Banff Day really began June 16, 1968 when an "open house" was held in conjunction with the opening of our present building. Many old timers, including Charlie Beil and Jimmy Simpson who performed the opening ceremonies, were on hand for the occasion, the Soroptomist Club of Banff served tea and everyone enjoyed it all immensely. In an effort to recapture the spirit of that day, Maryalice Stewart initiated the idea of a yearly get together in June, 1970. Over two hundred guests attended that year and they soon began to spread the word to others. By 1975 some five hundred people were participating and the figure has remained at that level ever since. Those attending come mostly from Alberta and British Columbia but there is always a sampling from the rest of Canada, the United States and even from overseas.

The event has made a valuable contribution to the Archives' collections over the years. Many of those attending bring their photographs, manuscripts, books, etc. with them to donate to the collection. There is also a good amount of identification and dating of

photographs done and on occasion some tape recording as well.

We would like to take this opportunity to extend to all of our readers an invitation to attend this year's *Back to Banff* Day celebration. It will be held on Sunday, June 19 from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. in the Gallery and on the back lawn at the Peter Whyte Foundation. Please feel free to bring a friend.

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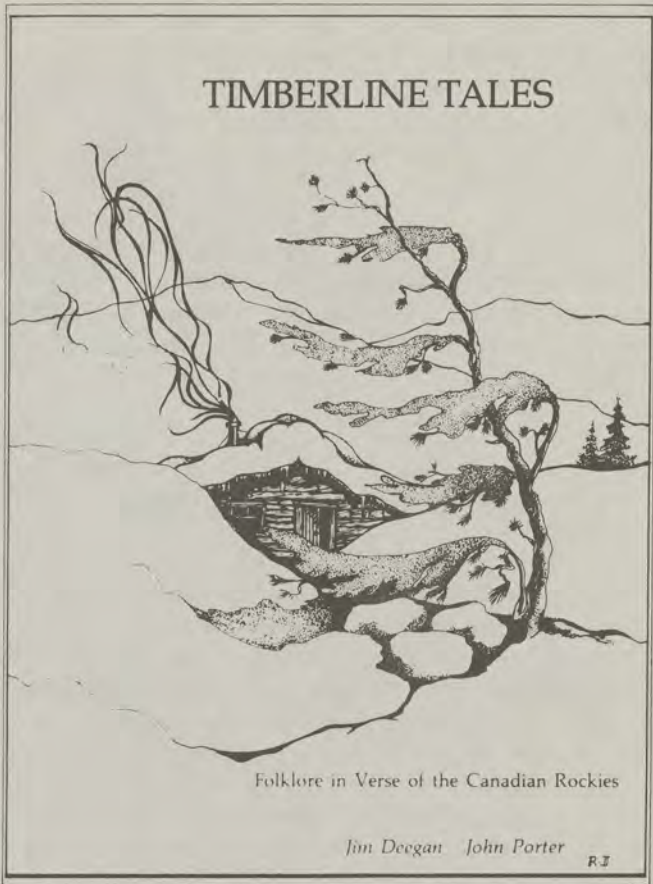
The Archives has been the recipient of numerous collections of historic importance to the Canadian Rockies region during the past few months. Although the space available in this issue does not allow us to list them in detail, at least two should be mentioned briefly.

Edward Feuz of Golden has contributed the photographs he accumulated from his patrons during a fifty-year period as a mountaineering guide. In addition, he is in the process of donating his collection of slides taken during the latter stages of his climbing career. Once again, as so many times in the past, we are deeply gratified by Edward's generosity.

In a similar vein, copies of the guide books of Hans and Christian Kaufmann and selections copied from the photographic collection of Hans Kaufmann were acquired from Christian Kaufmann of Grindelwald, Switzerland. Thanks go to Hans Peter Stettler, a guide with Canadian Mountain Holidays, for advising us of the Kaufmann collection.

Both of the foregoing and several other collections will be reported on in more depth in the next edition of **The Cairn**.

The building will go on its summer schedule of hours beginning June 13th:	
Banff Library and Peter Whyte Gallery	
Sunday	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Monday	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Tuesday	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Wednesday	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Thursday	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Friday	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Holidays	Closed
Archives of the Canadian Rockies	
Sunday	Closed
Monday	1 p.m. - 5 p.m.
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Holidays	Closed



Timberline Tales by Jim Deegan and John Porter is the first publication of the Peter Whyte Foundation. The book consists principally of the humorous verse of the two authors, but there are selections that are poignant and serious.

The publication came about because of the generosity of two anonymous benefactors. They had seen the poems in the Archives' collection and asked a member of the Peter Whyte Foundation's Board of Directors if it would be possible to have the material published. They were willing to donate the necessary funds, and the Board agreed to the project.

R.J. "Bob" Hope, who was raised in the Banff-Lake Louise region, was contacted to illustrate the book. Over the winter the editorial work was finished and the book was designed. Since it's now in the final stages of printing and binding, we're sure copies will be available in time for *Back to Banff* Day, and have arranged for the authors and illustrator to be here for the occasion.

Many of the characters and incidents celebrated in *Timberline Trails* will be familiar to our readers. Ike Mills, Bill Peyto, Bill Neish and Ray Legace are featured in several tales, as are the authors themselves in escapades that they'll not vouch to the truth of.

Copies of *Timberline Tales* will be available at the Peter Whyte Foundation at a cost of \$2.95, or by mail for \$3.25. Several of the illustrations will be displayed and on sale on *Back to Banff Day* as well (not all of them: Bob gave an illustration to each of the authors).

It's a rumbustious collection of verse, and we're sure that readers of *The Cairn* will share in the spirit of good fun that Jim Deegan and John Porter have had in Banff and the mountains.

Peter Whyte Gallery

Prior to his residency in Banff, Maurice Jones worked in an executive position for the Y.M.C.A. and as a commercial artist for various graphic art firms. Finding his creativity stifled by the rigid demands of the advertising world, he sought more adventurous terrain. As an active mountaineer and woodsman for many years, he began to find interesting and unusual points-of-view from which to do his paintings. Once amid the serenity of the mountains he records his observations with great precision and awareness, producing a watercolour that is exacting in shape and colour. Maurice Jones's watercolours will be on display in the Gallery from May 19th until June 15th.

* * *

An intermittent resident of Banff for six years, Pat Askren is a full-time fine art student at the Alberta College of Art. Represented locally at the Arts and Crafts Fair last summer and the 1975 Stonecrop Pre-Christmas Sale in Canmore, Pat's work may be described as genteel, quaint and accomplished. She employs pencil and watercolour to originate whimsical portraits of beds. Delightfully delicate, her beds and quilts are too enticing to avoid viewing and too alluring to deny fantasy. Pat Askren's show *Quilts* will be on display in the Swiss Guides' Room from August 22nd until September 7th.

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To coincide with Banff Indian Days, the Banff Festival of the Arts and the Indian Ecumenical Conference, the Peter Whyte Gallery will present a multi-media exhibition by Wilma Simon, an Ojibwa from the Sarnia Reservation.

Following a three year study of fine art at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario, Wilma attended the Banff Centre during the 1972 summer session. On completing it she was accepted at the University of Montana to study fine art and native education. In 1975 she went on to Harvard University, acquiring her M.A. in 1976.

Wilma is a young, involved artist whose work is of high quality. She was strongly influenced by the stamina and wisdom of Sarain Stump. Utilizing the techniques of painting, etching and ceramics, her work expresses her knowledge of contemporary Ojibwa life and culture and boldly defines its colours and symbols.

Wilma Simon's work will be on view from July 18th until August 21st. As an added highlight, the artist has agreed to give a lecture pertaining to Indian cultural heritage and its role in the visual arts at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, July 24th.

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The management of Western Co-operative Fertilizers in Calgary has kindly consented to lend us six paintings from its permanent collection. Commissioning painters from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta to depict in their own style facets of Western Canadian agricultural life since the turn of the century, the company has acquired an admirable collection. The artists which will be represented are Takao Tanabe, Maxwell Bates, Allan Sapp, James Nicoll, George Swinton and Jan Wyers. The exhibit will be on display in the George and Belmore Browne Room from July 18th to August 21st.

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The Gallery: Maurice Jones watercolours, May 19 - June 15; *Peter Whyte — The War Years*, June 16 - July 17; Wilma Simon multi-media exhibition, July 18 - August 21; *Aspects of the Head & Figure*, (circulated by the Edmonton Art Gallery from the Imperial Oil Collection), August 22 - September 7th.

Swiss Guides' Room: Peter Whyte — selections from the permanent collection, May 19 - July 15; *Peter Whyte — The War Years*, June 16 - July 17; Sarain Stump — selections from the permanent collection: *Pat Askren Quilts*, August 22 - September 7.

George & Belmore Browne Room: Hiroshi Yoshida (on loan from Catharine R. Whyte), May 19 - June 15; Walter J. Phillips — selections from the permanent collection, June 16 - July 17; Western Co-operative Fertilizers collection, July 18 - August 21; *Peter Whyte Mountain Lakes* — selections from the permanent collection, August 22 - September 7.

Banff Library: Carl Rungius — selections from the permanent collection, May 19 - July 17; *Peter Whyte Indian Days* — selections from the permanent collection, July 18 - September 7.