

# Superintendents Biographies

## Waterton Lakes National Park

This document contains the superintendents biographies written by Chris Morrison of Lethbridge and Waterton Park, Alberta, as a component of the 2015-2016 Waterton Lakes National Park History Project.

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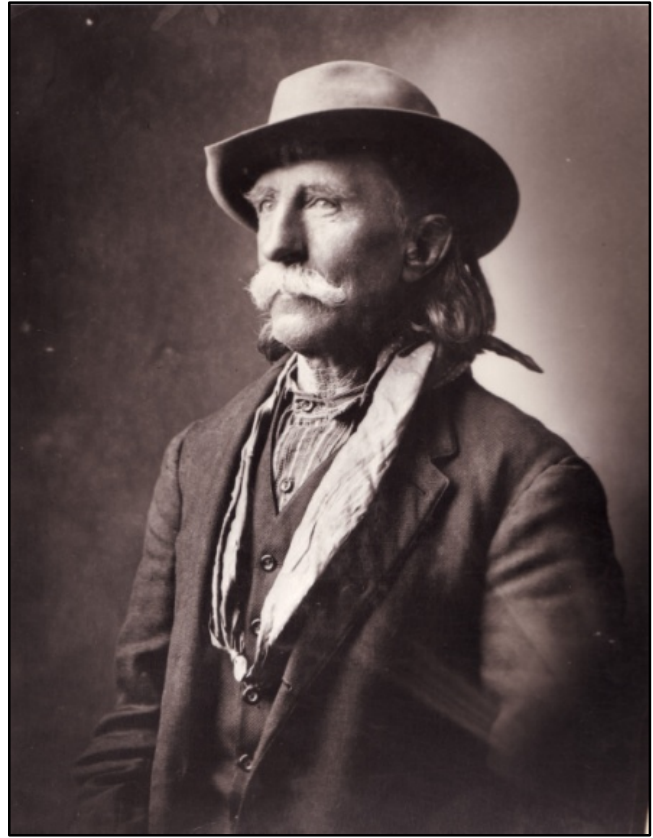




**John George “Kootenai”  
Brown  
Forest Ranger in Charge  
1910-1914**

John George “Kootenai” Brown is often called Waterton’s first superintendent but his official title was “forest ranger in charge” when he was appointed in 1910 to supervise what was then called Kootenay Lakes Forest Park.<sup>1</sup>

Brown was hired on the recommendation of a member of Parliament because he knew the area well, was a long-time land owner within the reserve, and had 10 years in the district as fishery officer for the Department of Marine and Fisheries.<sup>2</sup> As Alberta’s population grew,<sup>3</sup> and the park was beginning to be discovered by more people,<sup>4</sup> the need to protect natural resources and enforce regulations was essential. It called for a man who lived in the park and that man was Brown.



*Photo: WLNP Archives*

Born in Ireland in 1839, Brown had a reputation as story teller, an adventurer and man of many trades which blended into many tales, some factual and some fictitious. He is the only Waterton manager who has ever been the subject of at least four books and countless newspaper and magazine articles.

When townsite lots were made available to the public in 1911, it was Brown who handled the paperwork and followed up ensuring compliance with the signed agreements. In 1914, at the age 75, he was forced to retire,<sup>5</sup> but continued as an honorary fire and game warden for at least another year.<sup>6</sup> He died in July 18, 1916 and is buried in a family plot above Lower Waterton Lake with his first wife, Olive Lyonnais and his second wife, Isabella (Nichemoos).

John George “Kootenai” Brown endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> W. F. Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks, Volume 1*, (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1976), 31. WLNP Archives, digital files.

<sup>2</sup> W. F. Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks, Volume 1*, 31.

<sup>3</sup> *Alberta Golden Jubilee Anthology*, ed. W. G. Hardy, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd. 1955), 108: “From 1901 to 1911 Alberta’s population grew from 73,000 to 373,000.”

<sup>4</sup> Early statistics, although an estimate at best, show that this park had 2,000 visitors between 1911 and 1914. (“Visitation Statistics,” available from Visitor Experience section, Waterton Lakes National Park).

<sup>5</sup> William Rodney, *Kootenai Brown: His Life and Times 1939-1916*, (Sidney: Gray’s Publishing), 1969, 208.

<sup>6</sup> William Rodney, *Kootenai Brown: His Life and Times 1939-1916*, (Sidney: Gray’s Publishing), 1969, 209.



## Robert Cooper Superintendent 1914-1919

Robert Cooper, assistant to John George Kootenai Brown, became the first official “park superintendent” in September, 1914.<sup>1</sup>

Cooper, born in 1881<sup>2</sup> in Underwood, Ontario, moved to Calgary with his family and became an apprentice saddle maker, settling in Pincher Creek in 1903.<sup>3</sup> He was an active member of the community but by 1911 he sold his business and became a forest ranger, and later a game warden, in Waterton.<sup>4</sup> Being one of the first wardens hired by Brown, by 1914, at the age of 33, he was deemed to have had sufficient experience to assume the park’s top job.<sup>5</sup>

Several months before his appointment, the park had been dramatically enlarged, from just 35 square kilometres to 1,096 square kilometres,<sup>6</sup> which greatly increased Cooper’s responsibilities. As well, Canada’s entry into the First World War and the ensuing financial cutbacks left Cooper scrambling to maintain the status quo.<sup>7</sup> He was sorely unprepared for the superintendent’s job. Five years later, following a number of major missteps, Cooper was dismissed for incompetence.<sup>8</sup>

He moved to a ranch north of Pincher Station where he and his wife Mary raised sheep until 1944. The following year, they sold out and moved into Pincher Creek. He died in his sleep at the age of 64. Robert Cooper is buried in the Fairview Cemetery in Pincher Creek.<sup>9</sup>



*Photo: Rod and Gun magazine*

Robert Cooper endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup>Ian A. L. Getty, *The History of Waterton Lakes National Park 1800-1937*, unpublished research paper, March, 1971; revised February 1972, 67. WLNP Archives Box 115, Item 12.

<sup>2</sup>This date is at odds with Robert Cooper's tombstone which shows his birth year as 1878.

<sup>3</sup>Max McD, "New Superintendent Waterton Park," reprinted in *Lethbridge Herald* from *Rod and Gun*, Aug. 25, 1915. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>4</sup>"New Superintendent of Waterton Lakes Park," *Blairmore Enterprise*, front page. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>5</sup>E. J. (Ted) Hart, *J. B. Harkin: Father of Canada's National Park*, (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2010), 192.

<sup>6</sup>Chris Morrison, *Waterton Chronicles: People and Their National Park*, (Lethridge: Goathaunt Publishing, 2008), 14.

<sup>7</sup>E. J. (Ted) Hart, *J. B. Harkin: Father of Canada's National Park*, 192.

<sup>8</sup>E. J. (Ted) Hart, *J. B. Harkin: Father of Canada's National Park*, 197.

<sup>9</sup>"Death Removed Robert Cooper," *Lethbridge Herald*, April 14, 1945; "Long Resident of Pincher Dies," *Lethbridge Herald*. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29. These two obituaries have discrepancies as to dates. Cooper's headstone varies as well according to a photo found on line at [http:// Find A Grave.com](http://FindAGrave.com).



## Frederick E. Maunder Acting Superintendent 1919

Ontario-born Frederick Maunder, the first superintendent of Revelstoke National Park,<sup>1</sup> was temporarily assigned to Waterton in June, 1918. Commissioner J. B. Harkin asked him to improve the efficiency of the park in light of the difficulties between Supt. Robert Cooper and Chief Park Warden George Allison, both of whom were subsequently discharged.<sup>2</sup> With the official departure of Cooper in March, 1919, Maunder became acting superintendent of Waterton.

After George A. Bevan was appointed superintendent in June 1919, Maunder stayed on for the balance of the year to orient the new man. He then returned to Revelstoke where he resumed his duties there.<sup>3</sup>

Maunder was a man of varied experience having also worked as a school teacher, bookkeeper and locomotive engineer prior to becoming Revelstoke's

superintendent. He enlisted in the First World War in 1916 at the age of 40 but suffered from shell shock and the effects of gassing and was discharged.<sup>4</sup> He continued his work in national parks until 1926 when he and his family moved to Banff. He died in 1929.<sup>5</sup>



*Photo: Revelstoke Museum and Archives*

Frederick E. Maunder endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> Cathy Hourigan, Banff National Park library, Banff. Citation appeared on the website for Revelstoke Museum and Archives. November 2015. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> Ian A. L. Getty, "The History of Waterton Lakes National Park, 1900-1937," a research paper prepared for the National and Historic Branch, revised February, 1972, 80. WLNP Archives digital file.

<sup>3</sup> Ian A. L. Getty, "The History of Waterton Lakes National Park, 1900-1937," 80.

<sup>4</sup> Library and Archives Canada, Attestation Papers for Frederick Edgar Maunder, RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 6056 – 6. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

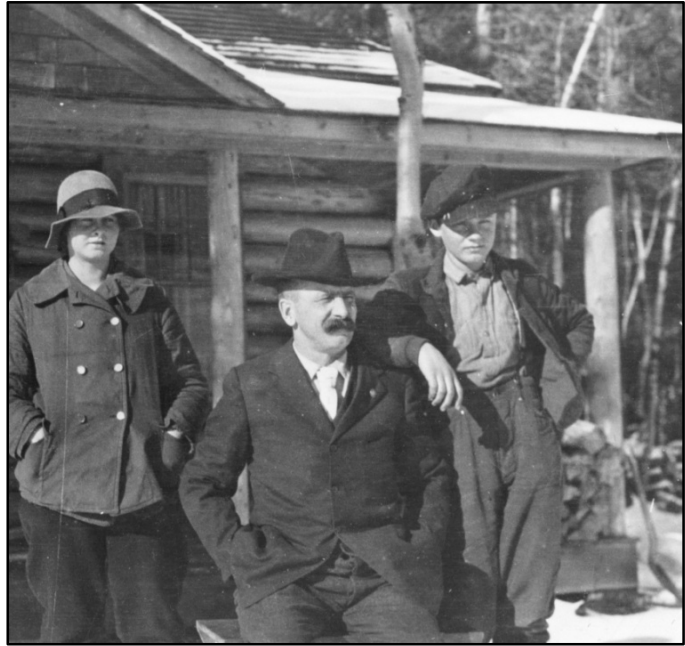
<sup>5</sup> Cathy Hourigan, Banff National Park library.





## George Ace Bevan Superintendent 1919-1924

The appointment of George Ace Bevan as park superintendent was the dawn of a new era for the park, one that saw many improvements and better management. Bevan, a school teacher before enlisting in the First World War, intended to farm in Cochrane, Alberta after his discharge.<sup>1</sup> But he applied for the job of Superintendent in 1919, and was selected over 64 other candidates.<sup>2</sup>



*Photo: Chris Morrison*

The end of the war saw reinstatement of a park operating budget allowing many improvements to be made. One of the first was a house for the superintendent which was ready for Bevan's arrival, built at the intersection of Evergreen Avenue and Mount View Road.

In the five years Bevan was in charge, numerous park improvements were made including a children's playground, construction of a nine-hole golf course, the addition of a townsite subdivision, as well as basic park work including road and trail improvements. The reduction of the park's size in 1921 from 1,096 square kilometres to a more manageable 762 square kilometres also made supervision somewhat easier.<sup>3</sup>

His ability to suggest, examine, plan and prioritize was evident by the correspondence in Parks Canada files.<sup>4</sup> For reasons that are not clear, Bevan resigned in March, 1924<sup>5</sup> and soon moved to Vancouver where spent the rest of his life. He died in January, 1950 at the age of 75.<sup>6</sup>

George Ace Bevan endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> Library and Archives Canada, RG150, 1992-93/166. Service Record of George Ace Bevan, Box 709-41, Item 42403; Digitized service file: 80709-S041.

<sup>2</sup> "Return Men Get Positions Waterton Park," *Lethbridge Herald*, May 15, 1919, 7. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>3</sup> Regional political pressures were something he kept an eye on as well, not the least of which was a growing desire by irrigation advocates to have a dam built at the Narrows between Upper and Middle Waterton lakes to provide water for thirsty farming lands to the east. No superintendent to that time had made as many business trips outside the park to local communities and to Ottawa to discuss park related matters.

<sup>4</sup> Construction of the Akamina loop road was a project he strongly supported. It was begun in 1921 but Bevan left before much progress had been made.

<sup>5</sup> No reason for his resignation was found in archival documents.

<sup>6</sup> Province of British Columbia, Registration of Death. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.



## **William David Cromarty Acting Superintendent 1925-1930**

W. D. Cromarty, as he was widely known, was half of the park's only multi-year seasonal superintendent team. His seasonal counterpart was Herbert Knight, chief park warden, who served as superintendent in the winter. Cromarty arrived for duty early in May, 1925 from Ottawa where he had worked as an architect for the National Parks Branch since 1921.<sup>1</sup>

Within days of his arrival, Cromarty was asked to address the Lethbridge Board of Trade where he was introduced as the man who would “put Waterton on the map.”<sup>2</sup> As a newcomer, Cromarty diplomatically kept his remarks to the Board of Trade brief noting he hoped there would “always be co-operation in the development of Waterton along broad lines.”



*Photo: Library and Archives Canada  
PA 119447*

By the spring of 1926, the Great Northern Railway of St. Paul, Minnesota, announced it would build a major hotel in Waterton, progress had been made on the Akamina highway to the B. C. boundary, and many new cabins were springing up. This was all positive proof of a new outlook for the park.<sup>3</sup>

At the end of his last summer in Waterton, Cromarty had seen more buildings constructed than any other park superintendent: the fish hatchery, the RCMP barracks, Prince of Wales Hotel, Stanley Hotel, as well as other commercial buildings and/or additions and many cabins including Waterton's largest private residence ever built, the Carthew Lodge (now Northland Lodge).<sup>4</sup>

Cromarty's seasonal management of the park was well received and his departure in 1930 was regretted by many of those who knew Waterton well, both residents and visitors and his reputation for effective management was well remembered.<sup>5</sup>

William David Cromarty endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> Edward David Mills, *Rustic Building Programs in Canada's National Parks, 1887-1950*, (Ottawa: National Historical Sites Directorate, Parks Canada, 1994),47.

<sup>2</sup> Music Deserves Definite Position in Community: Waterton Park Supt. Speaks, Trade Board," *Lethbridge Herald*, May 14, 1925. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>3</sup> "Waterton National Park Steadily Improving," Editorial, *Lethbridge Herald*, July 22, 1926, 4. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29. *The Lethbridge Herald* roundly praised Cromarty's improvements: "Waterton National Park continues to improve thanks largely to the excellent initiative of the acting superintendent W.D. Cromarty. Artistic touches here and there on the roads, at the golf club and elsewhere, indicated that some person with good taste in park planning is at the head of affairs. The business section, which used to appear so shabby, shy of paint and shaggy in architecture, is gradually being transformed. Here again good taste is being displayed. Waterton's main street has passed out of the pioneer period and is now branching into a modern appearance."

<sup>4</sup> Carthew Lodge as built in 1928 by Oland and Scott at a cost of \$10,000 for Louis W. Hill, chairman of the Board of the Great Northern Railway.

<sup>5</sup> In 1958, nearly three decades after he left Waterton to return to Ottawa, *Lethbridge Herald* suggested he had earned the everlasting recognition of having a mountain named after him.



**Herbert Knight  
Acting Superintendent  
1924-1931**

**Superintendent  
1932-1939**

Herbert Knight began his career in Waterton as chief park warden in June, 1919.<sup>1</sup> After the resignation of Supt. George Bevan in 1924, Knight served as acting superintendent in the winter months<sup>2</sup> until 1932 when he was appointed full time superintendent.<sup>3</sup>

Knight's appointment at the start of the Great Depression proved to be a difficult one financially for the park and employees. Knight was charged with identifying appropriate winter relief projects funded by the federal relief programs.

During his tenure, Knight was witness to several important events: designation of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park,<sup>4</sup> establishment of Camp Inuspi,<sup>5</sup> the Boundary Creek forest fire in 1935,<sup>6</sup> completion of the Chief Mountain International Highway in 1936,<sup>7</sup> erection and dedication of a cairn in the townsite to honor John George "Kootenai" Brown in 1936,<sup>8</sup> and an official visit by the Governor General of Canada later the same year.<sup>9</sup>

Knight was transferred to Prince Albert National Park<sup>10</sup> in April, 1939. <sup>11</sup> When he retired from Prince Albert after the Second World War, he and his wife moved to Victoria. He died there in 1962.<sup>12</sup>



*Photo: Kootenai Brown Museum*

Herbert Knight endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup>Rob Watt, *Waterton Lakes National Park, Warden Service History to 1970*. Version of 1 June, 1993, unpublished.

<sup>2</sup> Beginning in the summer of 1925, W. D. Cromarty, of Ottawa was appointed acting superintendent for the summer months, returning each year through 1930.

<sup>3</sup> “Knight is New Chief Waterton,” *Lethbridge Herald*, May 17, 1932, front page. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29. In May, 1932 when Knight was appointed superintendent, he and his family moved from the Cedar Cabin to the superintendence residence with his wife Marjorie Ida and children Joyce and Norm. Knight was the first park superintendent to have children in the Waterton school.

<sup>4</sup> The peace park was dedicated in June, 1932 at Glacier Park Hotel adjacent to Glacier National Park.

<sup>5</sup> Camp Inuspi was a YMCA youth camp on the northeastern shore of Knight’s Lake which opened in 1934.

<sup>6</sup> “Supt. Knight Issues Statement on Fire That Threatened Park,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 15, 1935, 8. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>7</sup> Chris Morrison, *Chief Mountain International Highway: Waterton-Glacier’s Promised Road*, (Lethbridge: Goathaunt Publishing, 2010), 65.

<sup>8</sup> Chris Morrison, *Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park: Born of a Vision*, (Lethbridge: Waterton Natural History Association and Pincher Creek Rotary Club, 2007), 33-34.

<sup>9</sup> The 15<sup>th</sup> Government General of Canada, John Buchan, first baron of Tweedsmuir of Elsfield came the park in September, 1936 with Knight playing host to his visit.

<sup>10</sup> “Knight Leaves for New Prince Albert Park Post,” *Lethbridge Herald*, April 4, 1939, 6. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>11</sup> Prior to his departure, Knight was honoured by the local men who held an informal stag for him at the RCMP barracks and presented him with gifts. “An evening long to be remembered by all present,” reported the newspaper. Another party for Knight was hosted by the park government office staff, this one held at the home of Mr. and Mrs Hugh Galbraith. Knight was given more gifts and he expressed this sincere thanks and his regrets at leaving the park. His long service had netted him many friends both inside and outside the park.

<sup>12</sup> British Columbia Registration of Death, Herbert Knight, 1962. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.



## Charles King “Cap” LeCapelain Superintendent 1939-1942

Charles King “Cap” LeCapelain began his career with the national park service in Banff as civil engineer after his discharge from the military at the end of the First World War.<sup>1</sup>

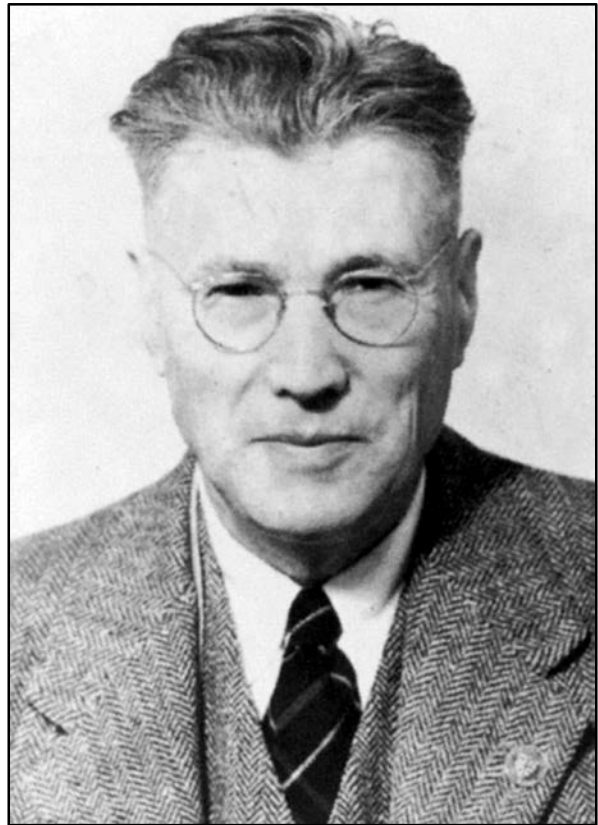
In 1932 he came to Waterton to supervise the surveying and construction of the Chief Mountain International Highway which was completed in 1936. He returned to Banff but with the transfer of Herbert Knight to Prince Albert National Park, LeCapelain was promoted to Waterton superintendent on April 1, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

Married with two daughters, LeCapelain’s transition to superintendent of Waterton appears to have been very smooth likely because of his previous experience working with local men on the highway.

He was seconded in 1942 to serve as Canadian liaison officer<sup>3</sup> for the construction of the Alaska Highway in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. It was hoped his highway experience in Waterton and working in an international peace park would serve him well in his new position.<sup>4</sup>

The Alaska Highway ranked as one of the greatest engineering feats of modern times: 2,414 kilometres of pioneer road, punched through the sub-Arctic frontier of the northwest corner of North America in less than eight months.<sup>5</sup> In 1946 LeCapelain was presented with a civilian award becoming a Member of the Order of the British Empire,<sup>6</sup> presumably for his work on the Alaska Highway.<sup>7</sup>

LeCapelain moved to Ottawa where he retired.<sup>8</sup> He died February 27, 1974 at the age of 80.<sup>9</sup>



*Photo: Franci Hammell*

Charles King “Cap” LeCapelain endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> Library and Archives Canada, service file for Charles King LeCapelain, RG 150, accession 1992-93/166 Box 550-35, Item 519280. Digitized service file –PDF format: 5507-35.

<sup>2</sup> “Report LeCapelain to Succeed Knight to Waterton Park Post,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Jan. 27, 1939. WLNA Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>3</sup> “Supt. LeCapelain of Waterton Park Named Liaison Officer, Alaska Road,” *Lethbridge Herald*, June 11, 1942, 7. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>4</sup> “LeCapelain Confers with Edmonton Officials,” *Lethbridge Herald*, June 15, 1942.

<sup>5</sup> J. Kingston Pierce, “Alaska Highway: the Biggest and Hardest Job Since the Panama Canal,” originally published *American History Magazine*, January, 2001. Available on line: <http://www.historynet.com>.

<sup>6</sup> Only one other man associated with Waterton was the recipient of the OBE, that being A. G. Baalim who owned a cabin in the park (308 Fountain Avenue) and was a Lethbridge businessman and war bond fund raiser.

<sup>7</sup> Copy of the notation regarding the award, Ancestry.ca. There are no remarks indicating the circumstances for presenting the award. The honor was noted in the *Canada Gazette*, 6, July, p. 4415. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>8</sup> He was posted to Ottawa where, at age 62, his last known position, according to the Annual Report of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1955-56, was that of Chief of the Land Division.

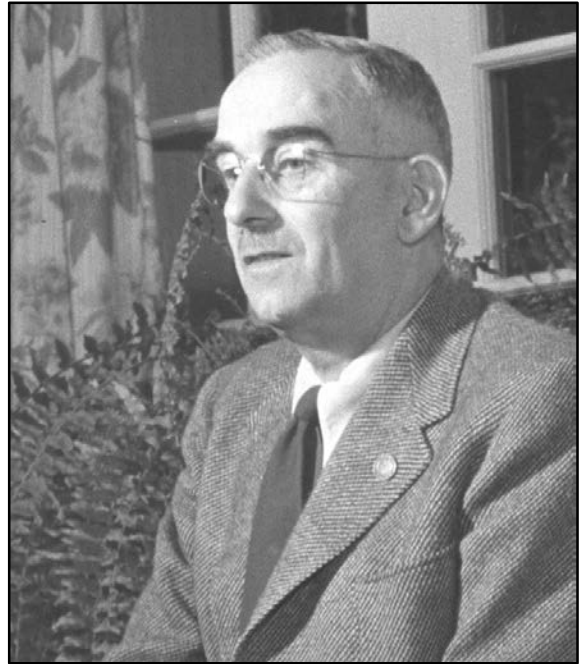
<sup>9</sup> Library and Archives Canada, service file for Charles King LeCapelain.



**Herbert A. DeVeber**  
**Acting Superintendent**  
**1942-1947**

**Superintendent**  
**1947-1951**

Herbert A. DeVeber was appointed acting superintendent in 1942 with the secondment of C. K. LeCapelain to the Alaska Highway project.<sup>1</sup> The year before DeVeber had served as assistant superintendent to LeCapelain, the first formal “assistant superintendent” at Waterton.



*Photo: Parks Canada*

Born in 1895 in New Brunswick,<sup>2</sup> he was only the second Canadian-born superintendent to serve Waterton.<sup>3</sup> DeVeber held degrees in engineering and forest from the University of New Brunswick,<sup>4</sup> enlisting in the First World War while still a student.<sup>5</sup> After the war he spent more than 20 years with the Dominion Forestry Service before joining the park service.<sup>6</sup>

An avid photographer, DeVeber seldom went anywhere without his camera and often sent photos to accompany his numerous reports to Ottawa, many of which are still on file in Waterton.

In May 1947 DeVeber was made “permanent” superintendent.<sup>7</sup> He was on hand that August for the dedication ceremonies of the Peace Park cairns near the international border on the Chief Mountain International Highway and attended other events associated with the annual commemoration of the peace park.<sup>8</sup>

After nine years in Waterton, DeVeber was transferred in 1951 to Ottawa where he took over administrative duties.

Herbert A. DeVeber endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> “Supt. LeCapelain of Waterton Park Named Liaison Officer, Alaska Road,” *Lethbridge Herald*, June 11, 1942, 7. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> This was the same year Waterton was set aside as a park reserve.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Cooper, was the first Canadian born superintendent. He was appointed in 1914.

<sup>4</sup> “DeVeber Is Made Permanent Supt. Waterton Park,” *Lethbridge Herald*, May 13, 1947. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>5</sup> Library and Archives Canada RG 150, Accession 1992-93/166, Box 2484 – 1 Service File for H. A. DeVeber. Attestation papers in WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>6</sup> “DeVeber is Made Permanent Supt. Waterton Park.”

<sup>7</sup> “DeVeber is Made Permanent Supt. Waterton Park,” *Lethbridge Herald*, May 13, 1947. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>8</sup> “Bonds of Peace,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 1, 1947. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.



**James H. Atkinson**  
**Superintendent**  
**1951-1957**

Jim H. Atkinson reported for duty as Waterton's superintendent on June 1, 1951 after completing three and half years as superintendent of Prince Edward Island National Park.<sup>1</sup>

Born in Scarborough, Yorkshire England in 1897, Atkinson joined the Imperial army during the First World War, and was wounded during the Battle of the Somme.<sup>2</sup>

When he joined the park service in 1921, his first assignment was working on the engineering of the Banff-Windermere highway. Jim and his wife Alverta were posted to five national parks before moving to Waterton.<sup>3</sup>

An enthusiastic golfer, Atkinson was closely involved in Waterton's course improvements in the early 1950s which were being orchestrated by famed Canadian golf course consultant Stanley Thompson.<sup>4</sup> It was Atkinson who suggested a bunker be built between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> fairways which was informally known as "Mount Atkinson."

The Atkinsons were the first to live in newly completed superintendent's residence in 1956. The modern ranch-style home, just a few lots from the old log house used by earlier superintendents, featured three bedrooms and covered parking.<sup>5</sup> They were not in the new house long. In 1957, after five and a half years in Waterton, they were transferred to Nova Scotia where Atkinson took over as head of Cape Breton Island National Park. He retired in 1963 as superintendent of Jasper National Park. He died in that park at the age of 70 in 1967.<sup>6</sup>



*Photo: WLNP Archives*

James H. Atkinson endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> “New Park Supt. Due Here Friday,” *Lethbridge Herald*, May 31, 1951, 6. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> “New Supt. For Waterton Park Arrives Here From Maritimes,” *Lethbridge Herald*, June 1, 1951, 7. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>3</sup> These were Banff, Prince Albert, Elk Island, Riding Mountain and Wood Buffalo.

<sup>4</sup> Chris Morrison, *Waterton Chronicles: People and Their National Park*, (Lethbridge: Goathaunt Publishing, 2008), 102.

<sup>5</sup> The house is still located at 110 Evergreen Avenue.

<sup>6</sup> “Atkinson Once Worked at Waterton,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Oct. 19, 1967. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.



**Tony W. Pierce**  
**Superintendent**  
**1957-1961**

The year-old residence built for the superintendent was almost too small for Tony W. Pierce, who was married with four children. The Pierces arrived from a brief posting in Kootenay National Park, prior to coming to Waterton in March, 1957.<sup>1</sup>

Pierce, born in England in 1920, was raised and educated in Ontario. In 1940 he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force and served overseas as a navigator with a bomber command.<sup>2</sup> After the war Atkinson earned a degree in forestry from the University of Toronto, and worked as a forestry engineer for the Ontario and Manitoba governments before joining the federal department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources in 1952. He was later seconded to the national parks service.<sup>3</sup>



*Photo: WLNP Archives*

Eager to carry on development activities in the park begun six years before by Atkinson, Pierce's biggest single project was overseeing construction of a half-million dollar Olympic-size swimming pool in the townsite which opened in 1960. During his term there was an unprecedented \$2 million dollars spent on Waterton improvements and new facilities which included 35 park buildings.<sup>4</sup>

He was also involved in the enlargement of camping facilities as well as being a strong supporter of the extension of the Akamina Highway to link Waterton with Glacier National Park (Montana).<sup>5</sup> On a personal level, Pierce was also keenly interested in the Boy Scouts. By the time he left Waterton, he had been involved in the scouting movement for nearly three decades.<sup>6</sup>

Pierce was transferred to Point Pelee National Park in 1961 and later Jasper National Park.

Tony W. Pierce endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> “New Superintendent Assumes Position at Waterton Park,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Feb. 25, 1957. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> “New Superintendent Assumes Position at Waterton Park.” While in the service and in England, he met and married Stella Denton.

<sup>3</sup> “New Superintendent Assumes Position at Waterton Park.” He was assigned to Jasper, Banff and Kootenay national parks before coming to Waterton.

<sup>4</sup> “Banquet and Gifts Honor Pierces Prior to Leaving Waterton for East,” *Lethbridge Herald*. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>5</sup> This project never came to fruition.

<sup>6</sup> “Banquet and Gifts Honor Pierces Prior to Leaving Waterton for East.”



## **Fred Browning Superintendent 1961-1964**

When Fred Browning arrived in Waterton May 30, 1961, he and his wife were feted with a reception at Kilmorey Lodge the likes of which had not been seen before.<sup>1</sup> Browning was impressed. He said the welcome was “one of the nicest I have ever attended and it certainly is overwhelming...”<sup>2</sup>

A civil engineer and army-trained surveyor,<sup>3</sup> Browning was a soft-spoken man. Born in Calgary, he was Waterton’s first Alberta-born superintendent. Browning joined the federal government service as a road foreman in 1946 and was in charge of townsite surveys in Banff.<sup>4</sup>



*Photo: WLNP Archives*

Browning arrived in Waterton during a turbulent time when residents and business people were under new pressures from Ottawa. That he handled them well is shown in the 1962 votes of confidence given by the Townsite Advisory Council and Waterton Lakes Chamber of Commerce whose spokesman said he was “the best administrator Waterton has ever had.”<sup>5, 6</sup>

He oversaw an extensive winter works project in 1962<sup>7</sup> and was also responsible for development of the new Crandell Mountain campground.<sup>8</sup>

During Browning’s last summer in the park, 1964, the townsite and greater park experienced the worst flood of the 20<sup>th</sup> century causing millions of dollars in damage. Browning did not waver, taking command of the park and following through on repairs<sup>9</sup> as well as generously publicly praising his employees for exceptional service.<sup>10</sup>

By year’s end he was promoted to division head of a new group in the Calgary Regional Office. Both Browning and his wife were active in the community<sup>11</sup> and the community held a farewell party for them at the Lions’ Hall at the end of 1964.<sup>12</sup>

He died in Calgary at age 50 in 1966.<sup>13</sup>

Fred Browning endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> The party was sponsored by business people and civic leaders from Waterton and neighboring communities.

<sup>2</sup> "Waterton Welcomes New Official," *Lethbridge Herald*, June 1, 1961, front page. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>3</sup> During the Second World War, Browning served in England, Belgium, Holland, France and Germany with the Royal Canadian Artillery 1st and 2nd survey regiments. He later qualified as a maintenance supervisor and in 1955 became an administrative officer. The following year he was promoted to the position of national park superintendent and before coming to Waterton was posted to Cape Breton National Park in Nova Scotia.

<sup>4</sup> "Waterton Welcomes New Official," *Lethbridge Herald*, June 1, 1961, front page. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>5</sup> Joe Balla, "Herald Article Is Criticized at Waterton," *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 8, 1962, front page. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29

<sup>6</sup> A Herald columnist added to the praise noting "we need more men like Superintendent Fred Browning." Joe Balla, "Let's Go Outdoors: Why Do We Have Parks?" *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 10, 1962, 6. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>7</sup> "\$108,000 For Project Under Winter Works," *Lethbridge Herald*, Dec. 30, 1961. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>8</sup> Bessie Annand, "Much Work Remains in Waterton Park," *Lethbridge Herald*, Sept. 5, 1964, 24. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>9</sup> "Waterton Has Won," *Lethbridge Herald*, Editorial, June 15, 1964, page 4. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>10</sup> "High Praise Accorded June 8 Flood Fighters," *Lethbridge Herald*, June 26, 1964, 5. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>11</sup> Browning was a director of the Waterton Park Lions Club and chairman of the Boy Scouts committee as well as a member of the volunteer fire brigade. His wife taught piano and singing, led a women's choir and assisted with school Christmas concerts. She was also the organist at the United Church and pianist for the community Sunday school. (see article noted in endnote 12)

<sup>12</sup> "Community Honors Departing Couple," *Lethbridge Herald*, Dec. 26, 1964. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>13</sup> "Park Official Dies at 50," *Lethbridge Herald*, Sept. 12, 1966, 2. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.





## **J. Al Pettis Superintendent 1965**

J. Al Pettis was the superintendent for just 10 months making him Waterton's shortest serving park manager. He arrived in February, 1965 from Riding Mountain National Park where he had been the superintendent since 1960. The second native-born Albertan to head Waterton, Pettis was raised and educated in Edmonton where he received a civil engineering degree from the University of Alberta in 1948.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly after graduation, he joined the park service at Jasper National Park where he worked as assistant to the resident engineer and then joined the administrative staff there. In 1953 he was transferred to Yoho National Park to serve as resident engineer for not only Yoho but also Glacier and Mount Revelstoke parks. After 18 months, he became superintendent of Kootenay National Park, a position he held for one year. He served as acting superintendent at Jasper National Park in 1956 and then moved to Riding Mountain.<sup>2</sup>

Pettis and his wife Elaine had four children, two boys and two girls. The couple enjoyed summer sports including golf and fishing both of which were available in Waterton. Their winter sport preferences were toward skiing and curling but there was limited skiing and no curling facilities in the park. Like the previous superintendent and his wife, they were members of the United Church of Canada.<sup>3</sup>

In November, 1965, Pettis was promoted to duties in Ottawa where he headed a section doing programming for the national park service.<sup>4</sup>



*Photo: WLNP Archives*

J. Al Pettis endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> “Park Superintendent Arrives,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Feb. 9, 1965. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> “Park Superintendent Arrives.”

<sup>3</sup> “Park Superintendent Arrives.

<sup>4</sup> “Head of Park Leaves Today,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Nov. 6, 1965. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.



## W. James Lunney Superintendent 1966-1969

Jim Lunney, 40, arrived in the park in late January, 1966, becoming one of the youngest superintendents to serve in Waterton. Born in the tiny town of Ponteix in southwestern Saskatchewan, Lunney was educated in eastern Canada and spent one year in the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1945-46 followed by various non-government jobs near Ottawa. After working for Noranda Mines for three years, he joined the civil service in 1952 and worked for a variety of federal departments before arriving at the park service in 1958.<sup>1</sup>



*Photo: Courtesy of the Lunney Family*

His national park experience prior to Waterton included working in Ottawa and then Yoho, Riding Mountain, Jasper and Banff. Jim and his wife Betty had two daughters, Susan and Maureen, who attended the Waterton School.

The 1960s were extremely turbulent years in national parks as planners began proposing new ways of dealing with lessees that were not well received by the public.<sup>2</sup> A park advisory council dealt with park representatives in an attempt to find workable compromises, a system that lasted until 1970.<sup>3</sup> As the local man in charge, Lunney took the brunt of the unpleasantness, conveying the situation and opinions to his regional and national bosses. It was not an easy time to be a superintendent in a park with leaseholders.<sup>4</sup> During his time in Waterton Lunney was among the first national park superintendents to be outfitted with a uniform and hat which were issued June 1, 1968.<sup>5</sup> Prior to this, park superintendents wore business suits.

Lunney was an enthusiastic golfer who walked the entire course enjoying the opportunity to appreciate the outdoors. He was a keen photographer, and avid card player.<sup>6</sup>

He was transferred to Mount Revelstoke National Park as superintendent and later moved to Parks Canada's headquarters in Ottawa. He died in Ottawa in October, 2005.

W. James Lunney endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> “Waterton Park Head Assumes His Duties,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Jan. 22, 1966. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> “Proposed Plan Termed Unfair by Craig,” *Lethbridge Herald*, June 16, 1966, 6. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>3</sup> W. F. Lothian, *A History of Canada’s National Parks*, Vol. II, (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1977) , 34-47;56-80.

<sup>4</sup> “A cornerstone of the federal government’s new policy on national parks, doing away with perpetual leases, was struck down in December, 1968 by the Exchequer Court.” *Chronology of Significant Events in Waterton Lakes National Park to July, 2015*. Digital holding; WLNP Archives. “Court Ruling Favors Park Leaseholders,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Dec. 28, 1968, front page. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>5</sup> Photo, (too poorly microfilmed to appreciate), *Lethbridge Herald*, May 27, 1968. Caption in WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

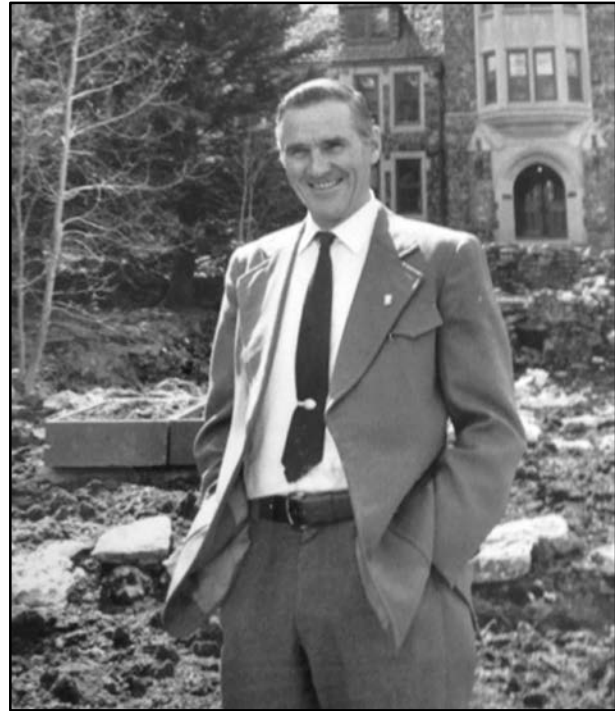
<sup>6</sup> Lunney obituary, *Ottawa Citizen*, Oct. 7, 2005. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.



## **Thomas L. Ross Superintendent 1969-1979**

Tom Ross was 45 years old when he was appointed superintendent of the park, having transferred from Elk Island National Park. Upon his appointment, the new position of assistant superintendent at Waterton was created and was filled by William D. Gallacher.<sup>i</sup>

Ross joined the park service in 1949 and served in various capacities in Jasper, rising to the position of chief park warden, and in Banff and Kootenay national parks as well as in Ottawa. He was married and had four children.<sup>ii</sup>



*Photo: Courtesy of the Ross Family*

One of the major problems that arose during Ross's tenure was the unannounced spraying of the international border between Waterton and Glacier, a practice implemented by the International Boundary Commission without knowledge of long term effects. A chemical defoliant was applied by air, a move that infuriated Ross because of the lack of consultation with park officials. Waterton-Glacier are the only parks along the entire 49<sup>th</sup> parallel.<sup>iii</sup>

A memorable tragedy during Ross's time in Waterton was the death of five climbers who chose to summit Mount Cleveland in late December, 1969.<sup>iv</sup> Although the event occurred beyond Waterton's boundaries, Ross and his staff as well as others were credited with assisting in the initial search.<sup>v</sup> The bodies of the climbers were not recovered until the following July, an operation in which Waterton staff played a significant role.

Ross left Waterton to become assistant superintendent in Banff National Park.

Tom Ross endnotes:

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i “New Superintendent Named for Waterton Park,” *Lethbridge Herald*, May 1, 1969. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

ii “New Superintendent Named for Waterton Park.”

iii “Park Officials Worry Over Killer-Spray Use,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Oct. 31, 1969. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

iv “Search Called Off for Five Climbers,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Jan. 9, 1970, front page. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

v “Glacier Park Searchers Are Thanked,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Jan. 17, 1970, 13. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

## **Dave Adie Superintendent 1971-1973**

The transfer of Dave Adie to Waterton in late May 1971 was done with as little fanfare or introduction as had occurred in the history of the park. A news item about Adie's appointment didn't run in the newspaper until 10 days following his arrival.

Adie was a native of Saskatchewan, the second Waterton superintendent to be born in that province. Prior to coming to Waterton he spent three years as superintendent of Wood Buffalo National Park. Throughout his time in Waterton Adie kept a very low profile.

The one exception was preparation for the Victoria Day Weekend of 1972. The drinking age in Alberta had been lowered in 1971, raising a concern that there was a potential for rowdiness on the long weekend. The weather, however, was not pleasant for the weekend, literally putting a damper on noisy parties. The only trouble, Adie told the local newspaper, came from crowding in the townsite campground which created only minor problems.<sup>i</sup>

One of Adie's last announcements related to Waterton was the 1973 prohibition on grazing horses in the park and the requirement that those who kept horses in the park board them at Alpine Stables. It was the end of what was known as a fenced community pasture near the park gate. Adie also expressed his concern over damage done to backcountry meadows due to the use of horses.<sup>ii</sup>

Adie was transferred to Cape Breton Highlands National Park in the spring of 1973.

Dave Adie endnotes:

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<sup>i</sup> Larry, Bennett, "Waterton Chamber Pleased with Victoria Day Behavior," *Lethbridge Herald*, May 27, 1972, 8. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>ii</sup> Waterton Imposes Grazing Rules, *Lethbridge Herald*, April 3, 1973. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 30.

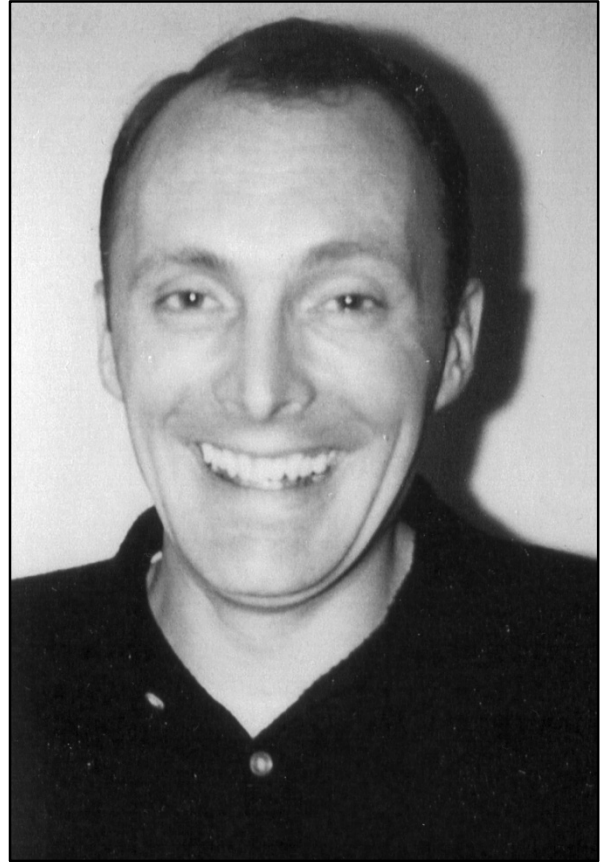




**Tom W. Smith**  
**Superintendent**  
**1973-1976**

Tom Smith came to Waterton from Wood Buffalo National Park. He was born and educated in Calgary, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Calgary. The 31-year old Smith came to Waterton with a decade of park experience which included assignments in Nahanni National Park Reserve, Elk Island National Park, and Jasper.<sup>i</sup> In addition he worked as executive assistant in the Ministry of Conservation.<sup>ii</sup>

Upon his arrival, Smith had to hit the ground running as tensions between the business community and park staff ramped up and verbal bullets were fired about a secret agenda to keep people out of the parks.<sup>iii</sup> He was faced with the same dilemma facing all other national park superintendents in Canada: how to accommodate the growing number of people coming to the park while trying to keep them from destroying the very part of nature they came to see. It was under Smith's administration that the much loved and long time Cameron Lake campground was closed and an area redevelopment was planned.<sup>iv</sup>



*Photo: Courtesy of Tom Smith*

In June, 1975 Smith became the second superintendent to be faced with a major natural disaster: a June flood that did more than a million dollars damage to the park.

Prior to his departure, Smith suggested that the greatest demand in Waterton for the immediate future, to be addressed in a master plan, would be additional camping sites.<sup>v</sup> He left before the plan was completed.

After three years in Waterton he was transferred in mid-July, 1976 to Cornwall, Ontario to look after the visitor services of historic sites in that province. He later spent 16 years working in Alberta Fish and Wildlife.

Tom W. Smith endnotes:

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<sup>i</sup> Andy Ogle, "Waterton Mismanaged to Death?," *Lethbridge Herald*, July 25, 1973. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>ii</sup> Work Record supplied by Tom W. Smith, Dec. 14, 2016. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>iii</sup> Andy Ogle, "Waterton Mismanaged to Death?"

<sup>iv</sup> "Waterton Camp Closes to Save Forest Plants," *Lethbridge Herald*, Dec. 3, 1974. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>v</sup> Andy Ogle, "Parks All Share Same Problem," *Lethbridge Herald*, July 26, 1973, WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.



**Jean Pilon**  
**Superintendent**  
**1976-1978**

Jean Pilon arrived in Waterton in July, 1976 and immediately took on the task of fulfilling his predecessor's suggestions to provide additional camping facilities which included constructing a walk-in campground in the townsite, revamping of the Cameron Lake campground for day use only, and repairing existing backcountry campgrounds.<sup>i</sup>



*Photo: Pilon International webpage*

Pilon had previously been superintendent of Yoho National Park.<sup>ii</sup> During his brief time in Waterton he was faced with defending and proceeding with the park's new master plan approved in 1977 which had drawn considerable criticism in southern Alberta.<sup>iii</sup> In response to the plan, efforts were made to improve cross-country ski trails and patrols as well as plowing roads to the trail heads.<sup>iv</sup>

It was also while Pilon was superintendent that the only human death caused by a bear in the history of the park occurred when Allison Muser, age 5, of Regina was killed near Little Prairie picnic site off the Akamina Parkway.<sup>v</sup> The event resulted in a legal action that was settled out of court.

In March, 1978 he was transferred to Gatineau Park in Quebec where he became superintendent.<sup>vi</sup> Gatineau Park is administered by the National Capital Commission.<sup>vii</sup>

Jean Pilon endnotes:

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- <sup>i</sup> Mike Harrop, "Park Teams to Invade Waterton, Four Park Campgrounds Revamped," *Lethbridge Herald*, July 30, 1976, 16. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>ii</sup> "Park Users Water Hungry," *Lethbridge Herald*, July 30, 1976, 16. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>iii</sup> Minutes of the Public Participation Meeting # 17, Park and VSC Plans, April 8, 1975. Document prepared and mailed to the public by Parks Canada.  
Mike Lamb, "Waterton Business Ills Rebutted," *Lethbridge Herald*, July 8, 1977, 11. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>iv</sup> "Waterton Plans Winter Action," *Lethbridge Herald*, June 14, 1977, 18. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>v</sup> Mike Harrop, "Pursuing Wardens Fear Bear Has Left Waterton," *Lethbridge Herald*, July 5, 1977, 17. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>vi</sup> "Waterton Superintendent Transferred," *Lethbridge Herald*, March 10, 1978. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>vii</sup> Considerable effort was made to secure a photo. The accompanying photo was taken from the webpage Pilon International and it claimed our Jean Pilon as an author. An attempt to contact the webpage administrators was made without success. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.



## **Tony Bull Superintendent 1978-1981**

Growing criticism was leveled at the federal government's practice of transferring park superintendents frequently and not allowing them to know their parks before being reassigned.<sup>i</sup> In Waterton, the situation was made worse by the delay in Pilon's replacement necessitating the summer appointment of two acting superintendents until the arrival of Tony Bull.<sup>ii</sup>

Bull, 35, arrived at summer's end in 1978 with wife Ann and a son and daughter. He soon proved to be one of the park's more popular superintendents for his willingness to deal with both businessmen and environmentalists on an equal basis.<sup>iii</sup> A graduate of York University in Toronto where he earned his MBA, he began working for parks in 1972 as a parks officer in Ottawa in the Department of Natural Resources. A year later he transferred to Calgary where he was the first management planner in Parks Canada working there until 1975. Then he moved to Halifax where he spent three years as chief of visitor services for Parks Canada's Atlantic Region.<sup>iv</sup>

The local newspaper noted Bull found himself in the midst of many decades old left-over controversies as well as some new ones<sup>v</sup> which included implementation of a new park management plan, examination of commercial development and activity adjacent to the park.<sup>vi</sup>

He left Waterton in mid-1981 to enter the federal government's career assignment program which trained promising civil servants for more demanding and higher positions. His last position prior to retirement was Director of Parks Canada's administration program.



*Photo courtesy of Tony Bull*

Tony Bull endnotes:

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<sup>i</sup> Mike Lamb, “Waterton Chief Between Two Camps,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 30, 1979, 13. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29

<sup>ii</sup> “Waterton Superintendent Transferred,” *Lethbridge Herald*, March 10, 1978, WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>iii</sup> “Waterton Lakes Superintendent Leaving Park for Position in Ottawa,” *Lethbridge Herald*, June 16, 1981, 13. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>iv</sup> Personal communication from Tony Bull to Chris Morrison, Dec. 20, 2015.

<sup>v</sup> Mike Lamb, “Waterton Chief Between Two Camps.”

<sup>vi</sup> “Waterton Lakes Superintendent Leaving Park for Position in Ottawa.”



## **Bernie Lieff Superintendent 1981-1988**

Bernie Lieff arrived in Waterton from Wood Buffalo National Park in December, 1981.<sup>i</sup> Early on, Lieff acknowledged Waterton's infamy for its rapidly rotating superintendents saying, "It's not fair to the park or the system to move after two or three years. It takes at least a year to be comfortable with a park." He subsequently broke the cycle and became the longest serving superintendent in 30 years.<sup>ii</sup>

Lieff became known as Mr. Local Initiative for his efforts to make park improvements and implement new ideas. Included were the establishment of the first co-operating association in Western Canada,<sup>iii</sup> the annual Waterton-Glacier superintendents' hike, dedication of the Peace Park pavilion near the marina,<sup>iv</sup> and the redevelopment of Waterton Avenue and the marina<sup>v</sup> to name but a few.<sup>vi</sup>



*Photo: Galt Museum and Archives*

He began his career in the public service in 1976 fresh out of the University of Western Ontario where he graduated with a Ph.D. in arctic ecology. He went to work at the Resource Inventory Task Force in Ottawa and a year and a half later was appointed chief of natural resource conservation for the Ontario region providing functional advice to the warden service in four national parks. He later became acting superintendent of Pukaskwa National Park on the north shore of Lake Superior. From there he went to Wood Buffalo National Park where he worked for five and a half years before moving to Waterton.<sup>vii</sup>

In 1988 he moved to Calgary to become head of visitor services for western parks at the Parks Canada regional office.

Lieff died in 1997 in Victoria, British Columbia.<sup>viii</sup>

Bernie Lieff endnotes:

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- <sup>i</sup> Lieff's appointment had been made months before his actual arrival. "New Park Chief Named," *Lethbridge Herald*, Oct. 21, 1981. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>ii</sup> Superintendent Finds Changes in Parks Shocking, Enjoyable, *Lethbridge Herald*, June 16, 1982, B2. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>iii</sup> This was the Waterton Natural History Association which his wife Joy headed for a number of years.
- <sup>iv</sup> This was dedicated in 1982 on the 50th anniversary of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park.
- <sup>v</sup> This project was begun in late 1986 and completed the following spring.
- <sup>vi</sup> Chris Morrison, "Lieff Leaves Waterton: New Job in Calgary Beckons," *Lethbridge Herald*, May 28, 1988, C1. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>vii</sup> "Lieff Leaves Waterton: New Job in Calgary Beckons."
- <sup>viii</sup> On line obituary. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.





## **Charlie Zinkan Superintendent 1988-1992**

Charlie Zinkan arrived in Waterton in September 1988. A 15-year veteran of the park service, Zinkan's most recent posting had been in the Yukon at Kluane National Park Reserve and North Yukon National Park where he had worked since 1984.<sup>i</sup>

A graduate in forestry from the University of Toronto, Zinkan's first assignment with Parks Canada was in Calgary where he spent two years at the regional office. He moved to Prince Albert National Park in 1976 as head of visitor facilities and townsite manager. In

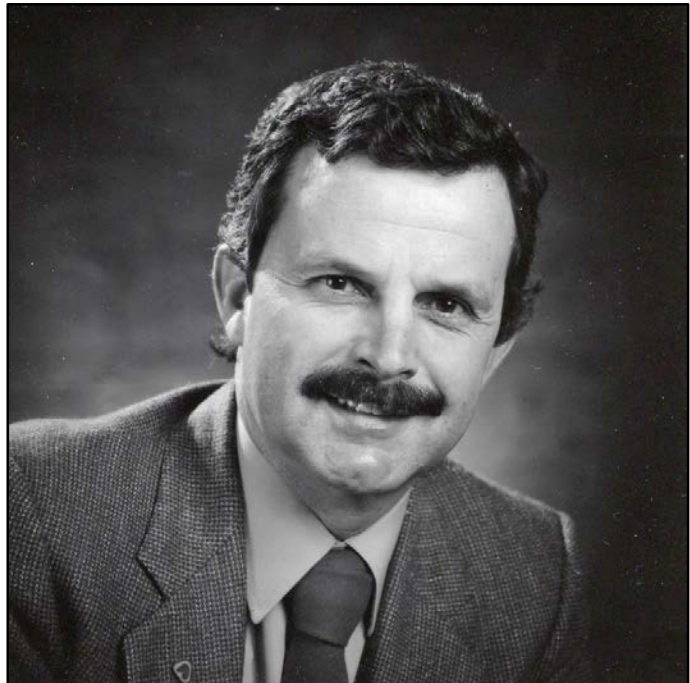
1983 he moved to Manitoba where he was responsible for a number of national historic parks and sites including Lower Fort Garry and Riel House.<sup>ii</sup>

A strong believer in community participation in the park management effort, Zinkan re-established the townsite advisory committee, a consultative group made up of representatives of various Waterton groups to deal with local issues and share information. He was much praised by the community for his willingness to deal with local concerns whenever possible. His forthcoming manner—even with bad news—helped establish a high level of trust between lessees and the superintendent.<sup>iii</sup>

In 1989, Zinkan began work on a new park management plan review, this time one that included the townsite. It was intended to provide guidance for a period up to 15 years.<sup>iv</sup> A major achievement was overseeing the \$3.6 million revitalization of the entrance road, over two years.<sup>v</sup>

At the end of his Waterton service, Zinkan and his wife Mary Ann were honored by the Waterton Natural History Association for their contributions to the park.<sup>vi</sup>

Zinkan was transferred to Banff National Park early in 1992 as superintendent. He retired as Executive Director of Mountain National Parks in 2003 and moved to a new home near Nelson, B.C.<sup>vii</sup>



*Photo courtesy of Charlie Zinkan*

Charlie Zinkan endnotes:

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<sup>i</sup>Chris Morrison, "Park Superintendent Named," *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 16, 1966. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>ii</sup>Chris Morrison, "Park Superintendent Named."

<sup>iii</sup>The author was a member of the Advisory Group for Zinkan's entire period of service in Waterton and this comment is both a personal observation and group consensus.

<sup>iv</sup>"Park Management Plan Coming Up For Review, *Lethbridge Herald*, April 22, 1989, 21. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>v</sup>Chris Morrison, "Ribbon Cutting Opens Kiosks at Parks Day Celebration," *Lethbridge Herald*, June 14, 1990, 5. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>vi</sup>"Former Waterton Park Boss to be Honored, *Lethbridge Herald*, May 22, 1992. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>vii</sup>"Park Boss Wrapping Up," *Banff Crag and Canyon*, Oct. 8, 2003. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.



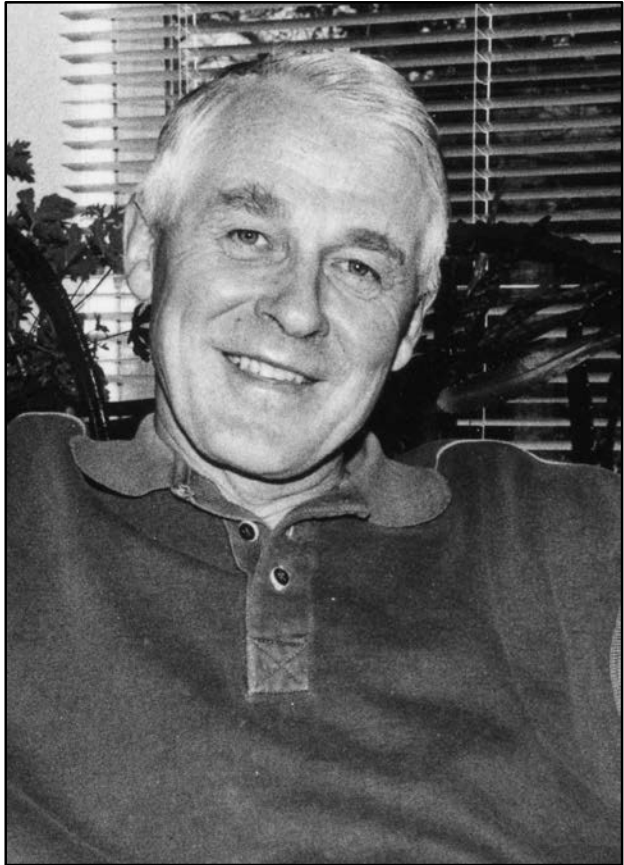
## **Merv Syroteuk Superintendent 1992-1996**

The park was without a new superintendent for nearly six months before the appointment of Merv Syroteuk was announced.<sup>1</sup> Syroteuk was educated in Saskatchewan and began his park career in Prince Albert National Park in 1971 as a seasonal park naturalist. From 1973 to 1976 he worked in the Ontario regional office as an interpretation specialist and then returned to Prince Albert where he became chief park interpreter and served, for a time, as acting superintendent.<sup>2</sup>

Syroteuk's tenure in Waterton was during a time of major change in Parks Canada, one in which a balanced budget was essential and changes required. He oversaw the long-term privatization of the golf course.<sup>3</sup> He also oversaw preparation of the long-term lease for the Waterton marina.<sup>4</sup> Despite public protest, Syroteuk closed the money-losing Waterton swimming pool.<sup>5</sup> Other achievements were the permanent ban of jet ski-boats on park waters,<sup>6</sup> and implementation of recycling facilities.<sup>7</sup> Syroteuk's wife Jean helped to create the associated community-based "Green Team."

When the third major flood in park history occurred in 1995 Syroteuk wasted no time in applying for emergency funding to expedite park repairs.<sup>8</sup>

Syroteuk retired in 1996 but returned to Waterton for several seasons to work on the tour boats as an interpreter. He was the first superintendent to return to the park to work for private enterprise.<sup>9</sup> Both of his daughters pursued careers with Parks Canada and during the winter of 2015 his daughter Geri was acting superintendent in Waterton just prior to her appointment as Field Unit Superintendent Southern New Brunswick (Fundy National Park).<sup>10</sup>



*Photo: WLNP Archives*

Merv Syroteuk endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> “Waterton Park Gets New Superintendent,” *Lethbridge Herald*, June 12, 1992. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> Merv Syroteuk Biographical Information sheet, WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>3</sup> Chris Morrison, “A New Lease on Life at Waterton,” *Lethbridge Herald*, May 19, 1994, 14. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>4</sup> “Cruise Company Signs Lease,” *Lethbridge Herald*, June 23, 1993. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>5</sup> “Waterton Pool Will Remain Closed,” *Lethbridge Herald*, July 3, 1993. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>6</sup> “Ban Upheld on Water Craft,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 8, 1994. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>7</sup> “Waterton Group Making a Difference,” *Lethbridge Herald*, May 22, 1994, WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>8</sup> “Massive Repair Effort Begins in Waterton,” *Lethbridge Herald*, June 10, 1995, 3. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

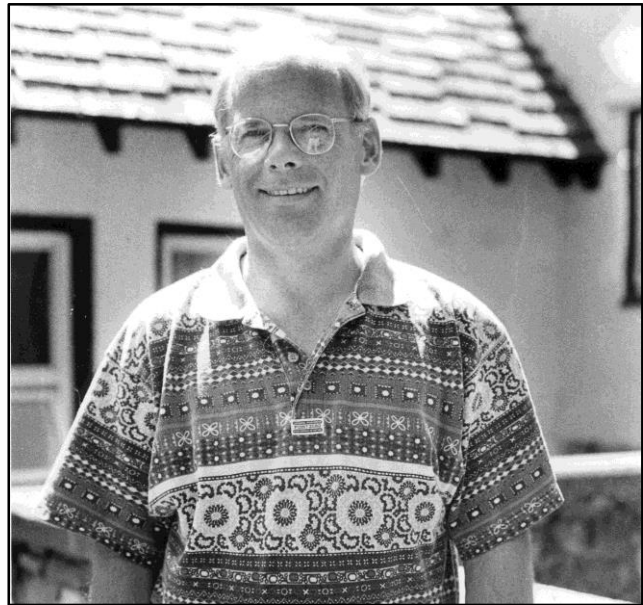
<sup>9</sup> Author’s personal knowledge.

<sup>10</sup> Personal knowledge of Edwin Knox, Resource Management Officer II, Waterton Lakes National Park.



**Ian Syme**  
**Acting Superintendent**  
**1996-1997**

Ian Syme served as acting superintendent for one year. Born in Regina and raised in southern Saskatchewan, Syme graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with a degree in geography and biology. He began his park career as a seasonal interpreter in 1977 and held a variety of positions which gave him a broad experience: back country and then front country warden, speed plow operator and truck driver in Jasper, front-country manager and assistant chief warden in Banff and then chief warden and acting superintendent in Yoho National Park.<sup>1</sup>



*Photo: WLNP Archives*

He came to Waterton at a time when Parks Canada was making strategic changes in its operations by adding tourism marketing to its protection mandate and to encourage creation of local municipal government to carry the cost of operating the townsite. While some Waterton business and residential leaseholders were not entirely sold on this new direction,<sup>2</sup> some changes were made and a compromise reached.

During Syme's administration, the old swimming pool site redevelopment entered its first stage of public consultation, and construction was begun on Waterton-Glacier Suites, the first new accommodation in the park in many years.

After his departure from Waterton, Syme returned to Banff where he became a warden again.

Ian Syme endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> Chris Morrison, "New 'Super' Brings Vast Experience," *Lethbridge Herald*, June 23, 1996. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> Chris Morrison, "Waterton Development Creating Stir," *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 27, 1996, 3. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.



## **Josie Weninger Superintendent 1997-1999**

Josie Weninger, Waterton's first and only female and Métis appointed to the position,<sup>1</sup> became the superintendent Sept. 2, 1997.<sup>2</sup>

She began her government career in 1982 as personnel officer trainee in the Yukon. She worked in Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and in Alberta for Health Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs and the Public Service Commission.<sup>3</sup> In 1992 she assumed the job of superintendent at Batoche National Historic Site also leading a province-wide reorganization for Parks Canada with staff from five geographical sites. In 1993 she was appointed superintendent of Wood Buffalo National Park.



*Photo: Lethbridge Herald*

At Waterton, when Weninger ordered closure of Marquis Hole road in 1998, a favorite picnic site, summer residents subsequently staged a protest complete with picket signs and bull horn. From her office Weninger called for an immediate compromise which involved appointed representatives to meet her within the hour. After hearing the concerns, Weninger had temporary repairs made and the road was reopened for the balance of the season.<sup>4</sup>

Later that year in September, when lightning started what would become known as the Sofa Mountain Fire 1998,<sup>5</sup> Weninger personally fielded numerous news media calls taking on the role of park spokesperson to provide timely details on the fire conditions in the park.<sup>6</sup>

Upon leaving Waterton, Weninger was appointed to a national team as manager of corporate development in Calgary.<sup>7</sup> In this new position one of her first assignments was revisions to and public input for a new Waterton management plan. Later in 1999 she became field unit superintendent of Wood Buffalo National Park and Nahanni National Park Reserve. She retired from Parks Canada in 2005.

Josie Weninger endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> “First Female Superintendent to Begin Duties at Waterton,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 13, 1997, 4. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> Chris Morrison, “Josie Climbs Life’s Mountain to Reach Peak Waterton Job,” *Lethbridge Herald*, July 28, 2998.

<sup>3</sup> Chris Morrison, “Josie Climbs Life’s Mountain to Reach Peak Waterton Job.”

<sup>4</sup> Chris Morrison, “Marquis Hole to Reopen,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 22, 1998, 4. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>5</sup> This was the first major fire in Waterton since 1935.

<sup>6</sup> “Waterton Park Forest Fire Mostly Contained, Says Official,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Sept. 7, 1998, front page. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 2.

<sup>7</sup> Janine Ecklund, “Public Meetings Begin On Future of Waterton Park,” *Lethbridge Herald*, 4. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.





**Peter Lamb**  
**Superintendent**  
**1999-2004**

Like his predecessor, Peter Lamb came to Waterton from Wood Buffalo National Park. Lamb, who was born in Lindsay, Ontario, studied business administration at Ryerson University. He began his 30-year career with Parks Canada in Peterborough, Ontario at the Trent Severn Waterway. In all he worked at 14 locations in five provinces and two territories.<sup>1</sup>

The co-operative spirit in Waterton impressed Lamb from the start and he told a newspaper reporter it was remarkable: “I’ve worked all over this country and none of the parks I’ve been in have been able to demonstrate the kind of willingness to work together everyone here has shown,” he said.<sup>2</sup> His concerns for Waterton echoed much of what previous superintendents in the 1970s had expressed regarding wildlife, increasing visitation and a desire to work with park neighbors.<sup>3</sup>

Lamb was the first superintendent who was not required, as a condition of employment, to live year round in Waterton. In the winter, he and his wife Beth lived in Lethbridge.

The last two years of his term as Waterton superintendent were devoted to taking French lessons in Calgary but in the end, he finally acknowledged at a public meeting he was unable to become bilingual.<sup>4</sup> Lamb left Waterton January, 2005 and spent the next year working on special assignment to the Chief Executive Officer of Parks Canada out of national office in Gatineau, Quebec. When Lamb retired in August, 2006,<sup>5</sup> he and his wife moved to Lethbridge where they spent six years before moving to the Sunshine Coast in British Columbia.<sup>6</sup>



*Photo courtesy of Peter Lamb*

Peter Lamb endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup>Personal communication with Peter Lamb via email, Dec. 15 & 16, 2015.

<sup>2</sup>Garry Allison, "Waterton Superintendent Has Been Everywhere, Man," *Lethbridge Herald*, Feb. 7, 2000. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>3</sup>Garry Allison, "Waterton Tourism Takes New Direction," *Lethbridge Herald*, March 4, 2000, 18. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 20.

<sup>4</sup>Public statement made at Waterton Lakes Leaseholders Association Meeting May 24, 2004, Waterton Park.

<sup>5</sup>Joan Quinton, WLNP Human Resources, email, Dec. 1, 2015. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 20.

<sup>6</sup>Personal communication with Peter Lamb, December 15 and 16, 2015.



## Rod Blair Superintendent 2005-2009

Rod Blair accepted the assignment in Waterton fully aware that he would be able to retire from the park service within three and a half years. Upon his arrival in September, 2005, he held an open house at the park office and clearly expressed his intentions noting “I’ve always wanted to live in southwest Alberta.”<sup>1</sup>

Blair was transferred from Prince Albert, where he had been superintendent since 2003. The move was a major disappointment to members of the Waskesiu Community Council who noted in an online newsletter that Blair was a tireless advocate for increased funding to National Parks and was open to new ideas related to park operations.<sup>2</sup>



*Photo: Chris Morrison*

When he began in Waterton, he quickly noted that funding was insufficient to maintain the park and undertake new projects and he became an advocate for increased budgets.

In September 2007 Blair and his Glacier counterpart Mick Holm were honored at the Parks, Peace and Partnership Conference held in Waterton in what was described as a Blackfoot traditional headdress ceremony. Each man received an eagle feather bonnet in the name of peace and prosperity. Blair was given the name Singing by the Water and Holm was given the name High Eagle. Blair was quoted as saying “It’s an unbelievable honor. It signifies a new relationship, an ongoing relationship with the Blackfoot.”<sup>3</sup>

Blair and his wife Elaine retired at the end of March, 2009.<sup>4</sup>

Rod Blair endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> Lynsey Frank, "Waterton Welcomes New Superintendent," *The Boundary*, May 20, 2006. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>2</sup> Community Council Commentary on Superintendent Blair Leaving Waskesiu 2005. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29. Also on line at [www.waskesiu.org/documents/SuperintendentBlairLeaving.doc](http://www.waskesiu.org/documents/SuperintendentBlairLeaving.doc)

<sup>3</sup> *Pincher Creek Echo* on line edition, September 13, 2007. Available at <http://www.pinchercreekecho.com/2007/09/13/par-superintendents-welcomed-into-tribe>. Article contains errors.

<sup>4</sup> Crown of the Continent Managers Partnership 2009 Forum Summary, Pincher Creek, Feb. 24, 2009.



**Dave McDonough**  
**Superintendent**  
**2009-2011**

When Dave McDonough arrived in Waterton, he had 25 years of experience with Parks Canada in both operational and management positions at the field, regional and national office levels. His most recent position prior to Waterton was Manager of Corporate Development for Western and Northern Canada.

He began his career as a park warden in Banff where he was a member of the Mountain Parks Executive Board, Townsite Management and Hot Springs Enterprise Unit boards for nine years. Earlier in his career, he led extensive park management and community planning programs in the Mountain Parks. He was also superintendent at Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks.<sup>i</sup>



*Photo: Parks Canada*

With his wife working in Calgary,<sup>ii</sup> McDonough alternated living in the park and in Calgary, summer and winter. During his first season in Waterton he initiated a community Superintendent's Barbecue to bring together park staff, residents and business people into a social setting. It was a regular feature each spring during his time as superintendent.

He received substantial funding for the park's ecosystem programs and improvement<sup>iii</sup> and was also instrumental in development of the Kootenai Brown bike trail which officially opened in October, 2010.<sup>iv</sup> It was under McDonough's leadership that a successful multi-year deer hazing program was introduced to rid the town of many of its troublesome mule deer.<sup>v</sup>

He left Waterton to become field unit superintendent in charge of Lake Louise, Kootenay National Park and Yoho National Park.<sup>vi</sup>

Dave McDonough endnotes:

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<sup>i</sup> Allan Latourelle, “Announcement—Field Unit Superintendent, Waterton Bar U,” 2009. WLNP Archives Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>ii</sup> It is believed his wife Brigitte McDonough was, at the time, a health care executive in Calgary.

<sup>iii</sup> “Government of Canada Investing in Health of Local National Park,” news release, May 20, 2010. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>iv</sup> The hard-surfaced bike trail runs from Linnet Lake to the park entry kiosks. Invitation, Community Bulletin, October 2010. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.

<sup>v</sup> “Dog Handlers Hazing Deer in Town,” Community Bulletin, October, 2010

<sup>vi</sup> Kevin Rushworth, “Promotion Offers Former Super New Challenges,” *The Boundary*, Sept. 9, 2011, 3. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.



**Ifan Thomas**  
**Superintendent**  
**2012 to present**

Ifan Thomas came to Waterton Lakes National Park with more than 26 years of experience in national parks. His most recent post had been the remote Aulavik, Ivvavik and Tukturnogait National Parks, Pingo Canadian Landmark and Saoyuehdacho National Historic Site in the Western Arctic.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas told *The Lethbridge Herald* Waterton was a place he'd always wanted to work and when the opportunity came up, he jumped at it. The combination of mountains and prairies and the outdoor opportunities had much appeal for this avid hiker, skier and fisherman.<sup>2</sup>

His immediate goal when he arrived was to focus his staff on creating meaningful experiences for park visitors and to encourage them to see parks as valuable places.<sup>3</sup>

The summer of 2015 was especially memorable for Thomas with the announcement that Waterton would be given a record \$107.5 million for much needed infrastructure investment and improvement. Included in the plans were resurfacing of the Akamina Parkway and reconfiguring its trailheads; replacing the Cameron Lake day use facilities; townsite water and sewer improvements; and work on the Red Rock Parkway, to name a few of the planned projects.<sup>4</sup>

Shortly after that announcement, another was issued in the form of an evacuation alert for the townsite. A forest fire in Glacier at the south end of Upper Waterton Lake was seemingly heading north. Waterton became command central and the park staff, trained for such an event, ably responded. It was the second time in 80 years Waterton and Glacier crews worked to fight a major fire in the Upper Waterton Valley.<sup>5</sup>

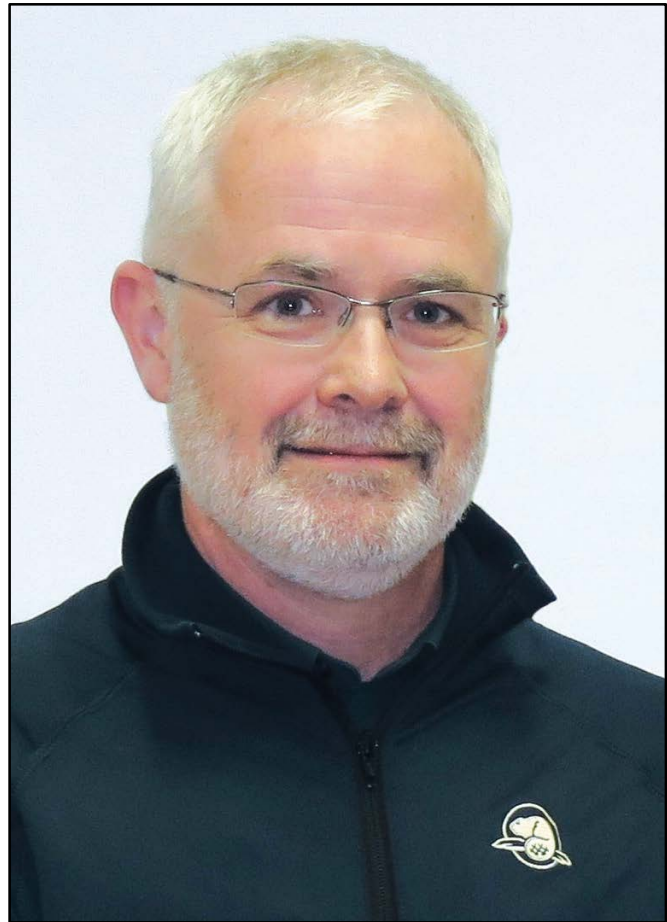


Photo: Parks Canada

Ifan Thomas endnotes:

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- <sup>1</sup> “Waterton Lakes National Park Welcomes New Field Unit Superintendent,” Information Bulletin, Parks Canada, Jan. 11, 2012. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>2</sup> Jamie Woodford, “Waterton Park Has New Superintendent,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Jan. 16, 2012, front page. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>3</sup> Jamie Woodford, “Waterton Park Has New Superintendent.”
- <sup>4</sup> “Tijana Martin, “Waterton Seeing Green: Feds to Spend More than \$100 Million on Park Improvements,” *Lethbridge Herald*, Aug. 1, 2015, front page. WLNP Archives, Box 130, Item 29.
- <sup>5</sup> In 1935 lightning caused a major fire near Boundary Creek and fire fighters from both parks worked together to get it under control.