

# ALBERTA TREES OF RENOWN

1984

An Honour Roll of Alberta Trees



A project of the



ALBERTA FORESTRY  
ASSOCIATION



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First Edition  
May 1984

A project of the  
Alberta Forestry Association  
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# ALBERTA TREES OF RENOWN

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Alberta has a rich heritage in its trees and forests — a productive and renewable resource that benefits all Albertans, now and in the future.

The commercial benefits of our forests are well known. They include lumber, pulp and paper, and employment for thousands of people. But equally, if not more important, is the impact of the forest on outdoor recreation, wildlife, rivers, streams and the sheer beauty of Alberta's outdoor environment.

Trees of course have been growing in Alberta for centuries, but the history of harvesting forest products is relatively recent. The Hudson's Bay Company, for example, commenced operations of the first sawmill in this province at Edmonton in 1880.

In addition to historic harvesting activities, many exotic or introduced trees have been planted in Alberta. Their adaptability and survival make an interesting study. Other trees are unique because of their record size or location.

## Purpose of the Honour Roll

Whether a tree becomes noteworthy because of its age, size, location, historical background or other notable characteristic, it seems worthwhile to record its claim for recognition — to identify it in an honour roll of Alberta trees.

Alberta Trees of Renown has therefore become a project of the Alberta Forestry Association — designed to gather and record information about unique trees, to help identify and locate them, and to protect them as much as possible.

The Trees of Renown program was announced by the Alberta Forestry Association (AFA) in May, 1983. This first edition of the AFA's Honour Roll describes the trees nominated and approved during the first year of the project, a most interesting collection which is indicative of the kinds of trees the program seeks to recognize. AFA believes you will enjoy reading about them, and hopes that this publication will inspire others to send in nominations of their own. There are certainly many more "honourable" trees out there waiting to be discovered.

## Record Trees

The Honour Roll is divided into two categories. The first one recognizes record trees, those with the largest diameters, tallest heights and widest branch spreads for each species. Also included in this section are trees growing at the extremes of their ranges — the most northerly, easterly, westerly and southerly, and at the highest elevation. The oldest trees of each species are also recorded.



## Notable Trees

The second section comprises notable trees, trees or groves of trees that have gained prominence or renown for any one of many reasons. These include historic trees, landmark or distinctive trees, and mutations. Other notable trees may include the one which has survived the most forest fires as indicated by fire scars, or even the stump diameter of the largest tree felled by beavers. Additional categories may be added in response to new nominations. AFA invites your suggestions.

## In Appreciation

The Alberta Forestry Association is pleased to acknowledge the initiative of C.H. Geale, who originally suggested the idea of the Honour Roll of Alberta Trees, and the leadership of the presidents of the Association whose terms ran through this initial year, J.A. Brennan and A.D. Kiil. Support from the resources of the Alberta Forest Service and Canadian Forestry Service in getting the program off the ground is greatly appreciated.

D.I. Crossley helped to get the program laid out and off to a fine start before he moved to Vancouver Island. The encouragement and research of A.D. Hall is greatly appreciated for it has resulted in many excellent nominations. During the academic year 1982-83, he was on loan to the University of Alberta's Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry while on leave from the Canadian Forestry Association.

Verification of candidate trees together with the preparation of the text on individual trees in this publication was capably handled by R.W. Hammerstedt. As AFA's communications chairman, H.A. Sellers did yeoman service in arranging for the design, editing and production of this first edition of **Alberta Trees of Renown** as well as for various public awareness activities for the Association and the program over the past year.

The important role played by the Department of Forest Science, Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, University of Alberta, is also acknowledged. The department is maintaining all the records for the Honour Roll and arranging for verification of candidate trees. Thanks, too, go to the many volunteers who have checked and verified all nominations.

In particular, the Alberta Forestry Association would like to thank the many individuals who took time to share their discoveries with AFA by sending in nominations and captivating comments about "their" trees. The Trees of Renown Committee is pleased to give individual recognition to you, and looks forward to many more exciting nominations in the future.

## Trees of Renown Committee

B.P. Dancik  
A.D. Kiil  
J.G. MacGregor  
F.W. McDougall  
P.J. Murphy, Chairman

### Oldest Tree in Alberta

**Species:**

Engelmann spruce

*Picea engelmannii*

**Location:**

Near Columbia Icefields,

Jasper National Park

**Nominated by:**

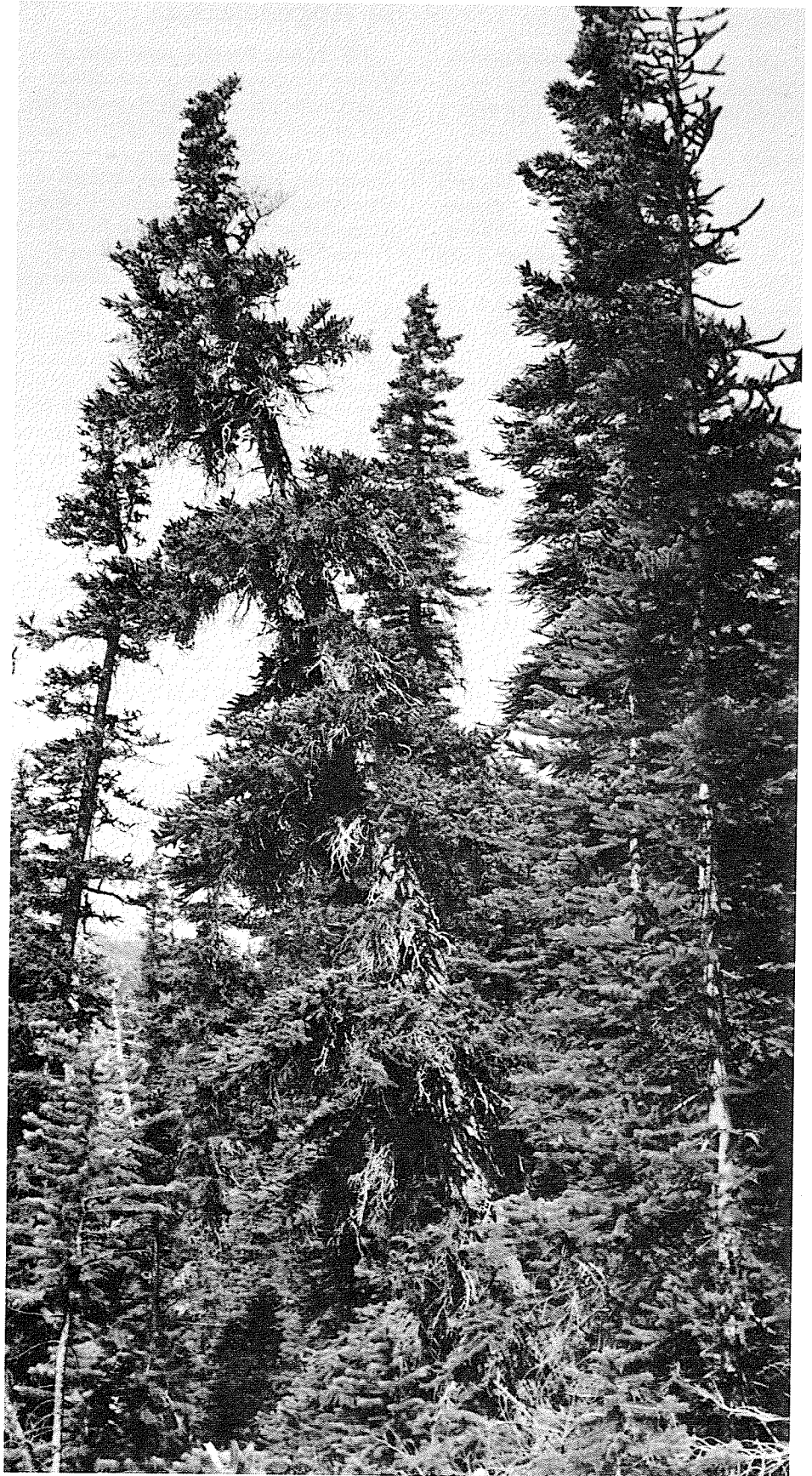
L.R. Jozsa, Vancouver

What may be the oldest living tree in Alberta is this 720-year old Englemann spruce, growing near the Columbia Icefields in Jasper National Park. Despite its age, it is only about 38 centimetres (15 inches) in diameter and stands slightly over 12 metres (40 feet) tall. This is a reflection of the cold exposed conditions under which it has lived.

As a result of its very slow growth, the annual rings are extremely close to each other, yielding a high-density wood which is relatively decay-resistant. The stand in which the tree is growing is effectively isolated from other forest stands by bare rock and rock slides, making it difficult for forest fires to run into it from the outside. Frequent showers and low lightning incidence in the area has kept the stand free from fire.

The tree began its life about the year 1265, so it was already almost 230 years old when Columbus discovered America. It has certainly lived through a period of great change in human activities.

This ancient spruce was discovered during the summer of 1982 by L.R. Jozsa, a scientist with Forintek in Vancouver who was searching for old trees to sample for tree-ring studies at the company's laboratory.





## Old Douglas-Fir

### Species:

Douglas-fir

*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *glauca*

### Location:

Banff National Park

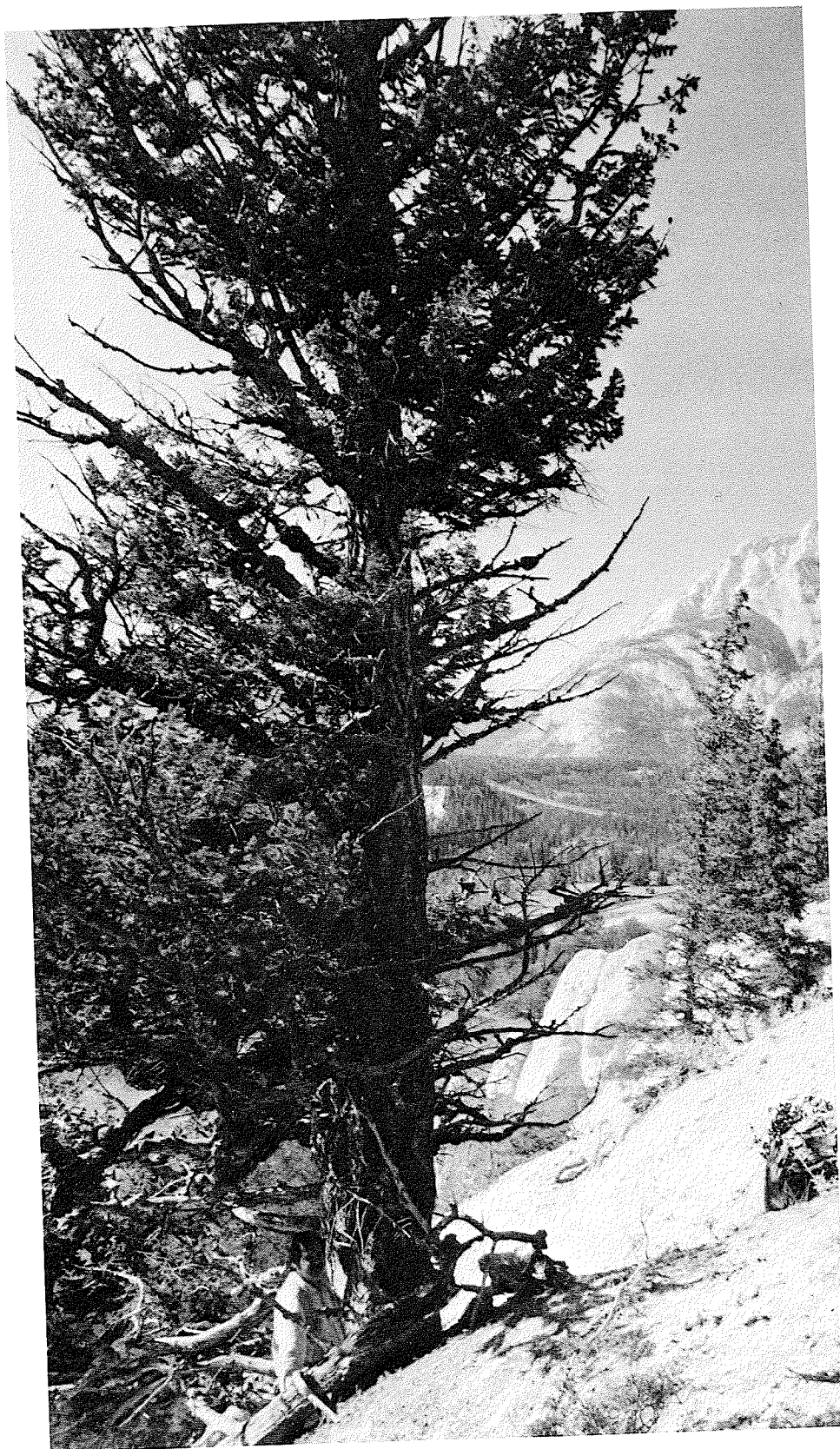
### Nominated by:

L.R. Jozsa, Vancouver

This tree is currently the record holder as the oldest Douglas-fir in Alberta. It began growing about the year 1310, and was 182 years old before Columbus discovered the Americas. The tree is now 674 years old and still living.

A major reason for its longevity is the site on which it grows. It is situated, along with several other Douglas-firs, all over 500 years old, on the very edge of a dry, grassy knoll atop a number of hoodoos. The fact that these trees are not surrounded by either dense forest or underbrush means that they have been exempt from any major forest fires in their lifetimes. Furthermore, the dry conditions of the site preclude attacks from the many fungal agents that often occur in wetter conditions.

This old Douglas-fir is situated within the boundaries of Banff National Park. Because of this protected environment, it is likely that it will grow to be much older still.



### Old Black Spruce

**Species:**

Black spruce

*Picea mariana*

**Location:**

Cache Percotte Forest near Hinton

**Nominated by:**

Peter J. Murphy, St. Albert

This Black Spruce was 362 years old in the spring of 1984, probably having started to grow in the year 1622. It is only a few years younger than the largest Douglas-fir, yet is considerably smaller with a diameter of only 29.5 centimetres (11.6 inches) and a height of 15.5 metres (51 feet). This old black spruce is growing on a cool wet site on a north-facing slope. The combination of a high water table and cool temperatures has resulted in poor growing conditions.

Because it has grown under the shade of a few larger trees, development of this tree has been further suppressed. However, the presence of moisture in that stand probably helped it to escape the many forest fires which have burned through the Athabasca Valley during its lifetime.





## Largest Douglas-Fir

### Species:

Douglas-fir

*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *glauca*

### Location:

Porcupine Hills west of Nanton

### Nominated by:

Eric S. Huestis, Edmonton

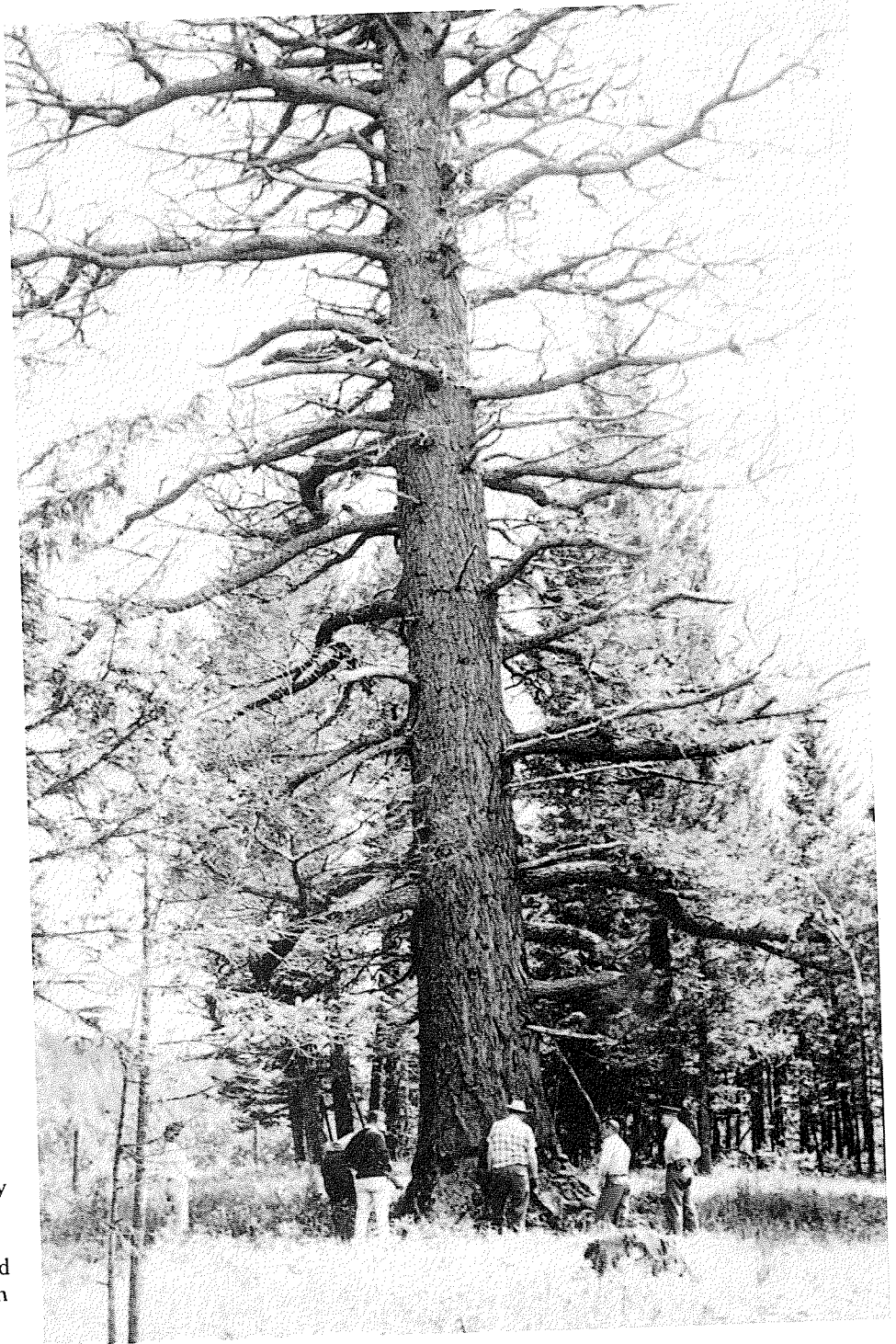
What is commonly believed to have been the largest-diameter Douglas-fir in Alberta in recent times was found in the Porcupine Hills. The tree was well-known locally and frequently visited, measuring over 176 centimetres in diameter (69.5 inches) with a height of almost 30 metres (98 feet). Its bark was 20 centimetres (7.5 inches) thick, making it virtually fireproof to surface fires which burned through the semi-open forest.

Estimated at 381 years of age, the tree sprouted from seed about 1538, the year Sir Humphrey Gilbert landed in Newfoundland and claimed it for Britain. Its early growth took place during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, and it stood about 15 centimetres (six inches) high in 1588, the year in which Sir Francis Drake defeated the Spanish Armada.

The tree died in 1964, and was felled on July 9, 1965, so that sections of it could be preserved. Specimens are on display at the Forest Technology School at Hinton and the Alberta Forest Service Depot in Edmonton.

Eric S. Huestis had his photograph taken in front of this tree in 1928, shortly after he began his career with the old Dominion Forestry Branch of the Department of the Interior. Huestis joined the Alberta Forest Service in 1930 with the transfer of resources to provincial jurisdiction, later becoming Director of Forestry and Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests for Alberta.

There are reports of larger Douglas-fir in earlier days in the Aura Creek and Wildcat Hills area, and along the Bow River Valley west of Calgary. Those stands were logged by the Eau Claire



Lumber Company which drove logs on the Bow River to its sawmill in Calgary.

The search for Alberta's largest living Douglas-fir continues.

### “Wright” Spruce

**Species:**

White spruce

*Picea glauca* (Moench) Voss

**Location:**

Hinton (St. Regis Forest  
Management Area)

**Nominated by:**

J.C. Wright, Hinton

This gigantic White spruce was discovered in 1961 by J.C. Wright, who is now chief forester of St. Regis (Alberta) Limited. It is at this point the tallest tree in Alberta, past or present, which has been nominated for Trees of Renown.

The tree was 44.8 metres (147 feet) tall, 88.9 centimetres (35 inches) in diameter at breast height, and about 250 to 275 years old at the time it was felled in 1980. The size of this tree is significant even by British Columbia coastal standards, clearly demonstrating the potential of this common Alberta species which usually averages around 20 to 25 metres in height.

When the tree was originally discovered in a research plot for growth studies in 1961, a plaque was affixed to it requesting that the tree not be cut. However, when the surrounding stand was harvested in 1980, it was felt that the giant could not stand alone after being exposed to the force of the wind. Indeed, the tree already bore the scars of exposure from simply being so much taller than its neighbours. In the past, it had been damaged by wind or lightning with the result that it grew in three large forks rather than the typical single stem of the White spruce.

The tree was then harvested because of these and other factors.





**Living Species:**

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Circum- ference</b>	<b>Height</b>	<b>Crown Spread</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Nominator</b>	<b>Page</b>
	Years	Centimetres	Metres	Metres				
Engelmann spruce <i>Picea engelmannii</i>	720*	119.7	12.2	N/A	N/A	Jasper	L. Jozsa	6
Douglas-fir <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> var. <i>glauca</i>	674*	263.3	13.7	N/A	N/A	Banff	L. Jozsa	7
Black spruce <i>Picea mariana</i>	362*	89.5	20.4	N/A	N/A	Hinton	P.J. Murphy	8
Tamarack <i>Larix laricina</i>	152	145.5*	17.3	5.6	118	Edmonton	T. Boyko	
Balsam poplar <i>Populus balsamifera</i>	87	368.3*	33.2	16.3	267	Hinton	Mary Bond	
Balsam poplar <i>Populus balsamifera</i>	N/A	324.5	39.6*	14.6	270	Edmonton	Edith Sellers	

**Trees of the Past:**

Douglas-fir <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> var. <i>glauca</i>	381	554.6*	29.9	N/A	N/A	Porcupine Hills	E. Huestis	9
White spruce <i>Picea glauca</i>	250	279.3*	44.8*	N/A	N/A	Hinton	J.C. Wright	10

\* Indicates record for which the tree qualifies.

### Burmis Pine

**Species:**

Limber pine  
*Pinus flexilis*

**Location:**

Highway 3, near Burmis

**Nominated by:**

Robert J. Coleman, Lethbridge  
and A.D. Hall, Ottawa

Anyone who has ever driven on the highway through the Crowsnest Pass will recognize this very distinctive and picturesque pine. In fact, even those who have not travelled there may recognize the tree as one that has appeared on a large number of postcards and calendars over the years.

At one time there were actually two of these trees (the weathered stump of the other one appears in the lower left of the photograph). Together, they have been photographed, painted and sketched

countless times by tourists and artists alike. The strange yet beautiful shape of the trees is a result of both the genetic makeup of the species and the environment in which they are growing.

The limber pine generally produces a short, thick, crooked and irregularly limbed trunk as observed in this Burmis Pine. However, there is the additional factor of exposure to the high chinook winds which have produced this beautiful "swept back" effect of the branches on the Burmis Pine.



## Carved Tree

### Species:

Lodgepole pine

*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*

### Location:

Near Lower Kananaskis Lake

### Nominated by:

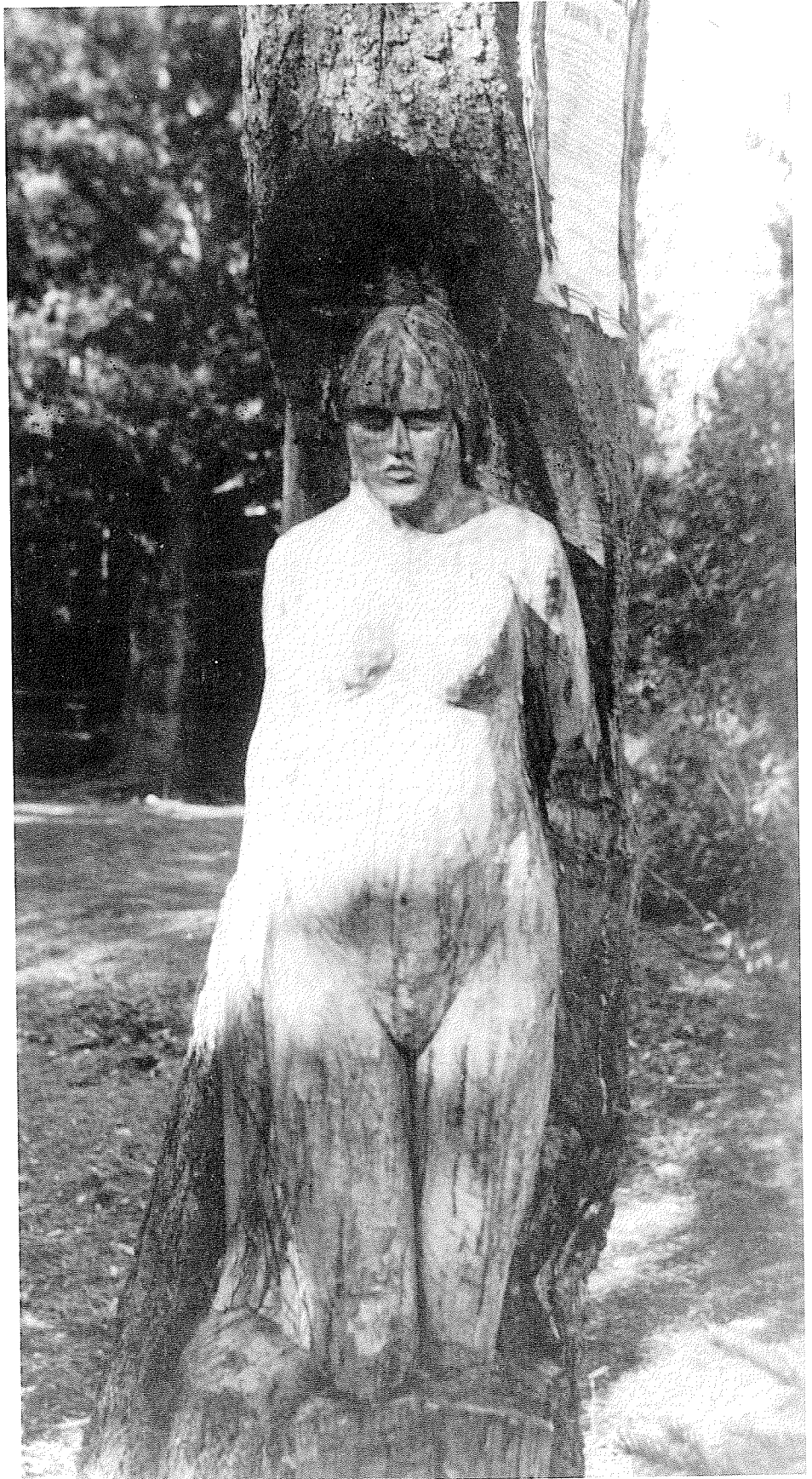
J. Dexter Champion, Hinton

Located near Lower Kananaskis Lake, this tree is believed to have been carved by Jack Fuller who was a guide and outfitter from Banff. Dexter Champion, forest ranger at the Kananaskis Lakes Station at the time this photograph was taken in 1935, believes the tree was carved about 1929 or 1930 when it was a live lodgepole pine about 35 centimetres (14 inches) in diameter.

Champion did not see Jack Fuller at work on the Carved Tree, but had talked to someone who did. Fuller would evidently take to carving in the evening when his party was out fishing. The work was done with an axe and a jack-knife. Champion described how he kept an eye on the tree for the three years he was there, at one time speaking sternly to a group of ladies who tried to improve on it, imploring them to leave it alone.

The tree was apparently felled at the time the lower lake was cleared for the Calgary Power Reservoir. Champion believes that the carving was moved, but its whereabouts are unknown.

Dexter Champion understands that there were as many as seven of these carvings at one time, but he himself knew of only three : this one at the Lower Kananaskis Lake, one at Marble Creek in the Spray Lakes-Mount Assiniboine area, and one at the head of the Spray River.





### Crooked Trees

**Species:**

Lodgepole pine

*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*

**Location:**

Jasper National Park

**Nominated by:**

A.D. Hall, Ottawa

The Valley of Crooked Trees is a small area near Jasper, in which is growing a group of lodgepole pines whose trunks are strangely bent and misshapen. Most of the pine in this valley have their trunks displaced in sharp 90-degree angles at a point about three feet from the ground, above which they twist or quickly regain their vertical orientation. The trees, like those normal ones surrounding them, appear to be 60 to 80 years old.

There have been a number of explanations for the occurrence and concentration of these crooked lodgepole pines. They could have been malformed by a local drift of snow accumulating in the depression, or side branches may have taken over when terminal buds were injured by colder air in a local frost pocket. Some observers believe that years ago one of the many fires which have swept the area killed all the trees, following which young pine seeded in and became established in the burn.

Early in their life, the developing saplings were bent over as the still-standing fire-killed trees were blown down to form a mat of interlaced trunks. The young bent or partially broken pines reached for openings to escape the covering blowdown, and eventually new growth found its way through the layer of dead trees. The fallen ones decayed with time, removing all evidence of the cause.

A more likely cause has been recently brought to light by research on the west coast of Vancouver Island. A similar problem was spotted there, and subsequently researched. The researchers found that the stand was suffering under a nutrient imbalance, arsenic toxicity and boron deficiency. It is not known whether one or all three of these occurrences caused the problem. However, it is known



that the problem was not of a physical nature. Unless research is done on the Jasper trees, we can only continue to speculate.

A sketch of the Valley of Crooked Trees and a description of them can be found in **The Banff-Jasper Highway** by M.B. Williams. This publication is an excellent description of the route followed by the Icefields Parkway from Banff to Jasper with colourful information for the traveller on the landscape, early exploration and use of the surrounding area. In the account of this unique valley, the author, Mabel Williams, writes that it is "so narrow that you are apt to pass by without noticing it," and that there "every bole is bent, twisted, contorted out of shape. Some have gnarled and knotty elbows as if they had been attacked by some sort of arboreal arthritis. Others are twisted like corkscrews or bulge like the neck of a cormorant which has a half-swallowed fish in its throat."

The Valley of the Crooked Trees is not widely publicized, even though it is within the protecting confines of Jasper National Park, because it is readily accessible to passers-by on the highway. Those few thoughtless people who vandalize parks and other treasured places will easily pass the area without noticing it, while the more observant, careful users of the park can readily find and explore it.



## Dunvegan Maple

### Species:

Manitoba maple

*Acer negundo*

### Location:

Dunvegan

### Nominated by:

Jerry Tanner, Grande Prairie

This historic maple comes to us from the "Land of Twelve Foot Davis" in Peace River Country. The tree is not only interesting for its history but, as you can see, it is also rather oddly formed.

The Dunvegan Maple was brought to the flat above the Peace River behind the Dunvegan Catholic church by James McDougall in 1883. McDougall was chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at Dunvegan who, upon returning from a trip to the east, brought with him the Manitoba maples which surround the sites of the old buildings of the post. Little did he know that these trees would eventually provide welcome shade throughout the Peace River area.

Others from the surrounding area took cuttings from the Dunvegan maples and planted them all over Peace River Country. Tom Kerr, an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company and a good friend of James McDougall, took some cuttings all the way to Sturgeon Lake (near Valleyview) and started them there in 1911.

The Dunvegan Maple is now 101 years old and still growing. The original trunk long since lay down on the ground, with the result that several of the branches themselves grew into full-size trees. Even if the original maple at Dunvegan should die, it will live on for many years through its progeny which have put down roots just as surely as the hardy pioneers who have settled the Peace River Country.



### Dwarf Lodgepole Pine

**Species:**

Lodgepole pine

*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*

**Location:**

Greg River area near Hinton

**Nominated by:**

D.I. Crossley, Hinton

Genetic mutations can cause dwarfism in trees. This mutation was spotted along the Greg River by Desmond I. Crossley, chief forester for St. Regis (Alberta) Ltd., who recognized the dwarf because of its relatively small size among the others within the stand. The age of the tree was 42 years in 1983, yet it stood only 1.83 metres (six feet) in height.

Crossley successfully transplanted the tree to his home in Hinton where he could protect it. He donated it to the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry in 1983 when he moved away. The tree is now located on the University of Alberta Devonian Botanic Garden near Devon.





## Fire Fir

### Species:

Douglas-fir

*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *glauca*

### Location:

Jasper National Park

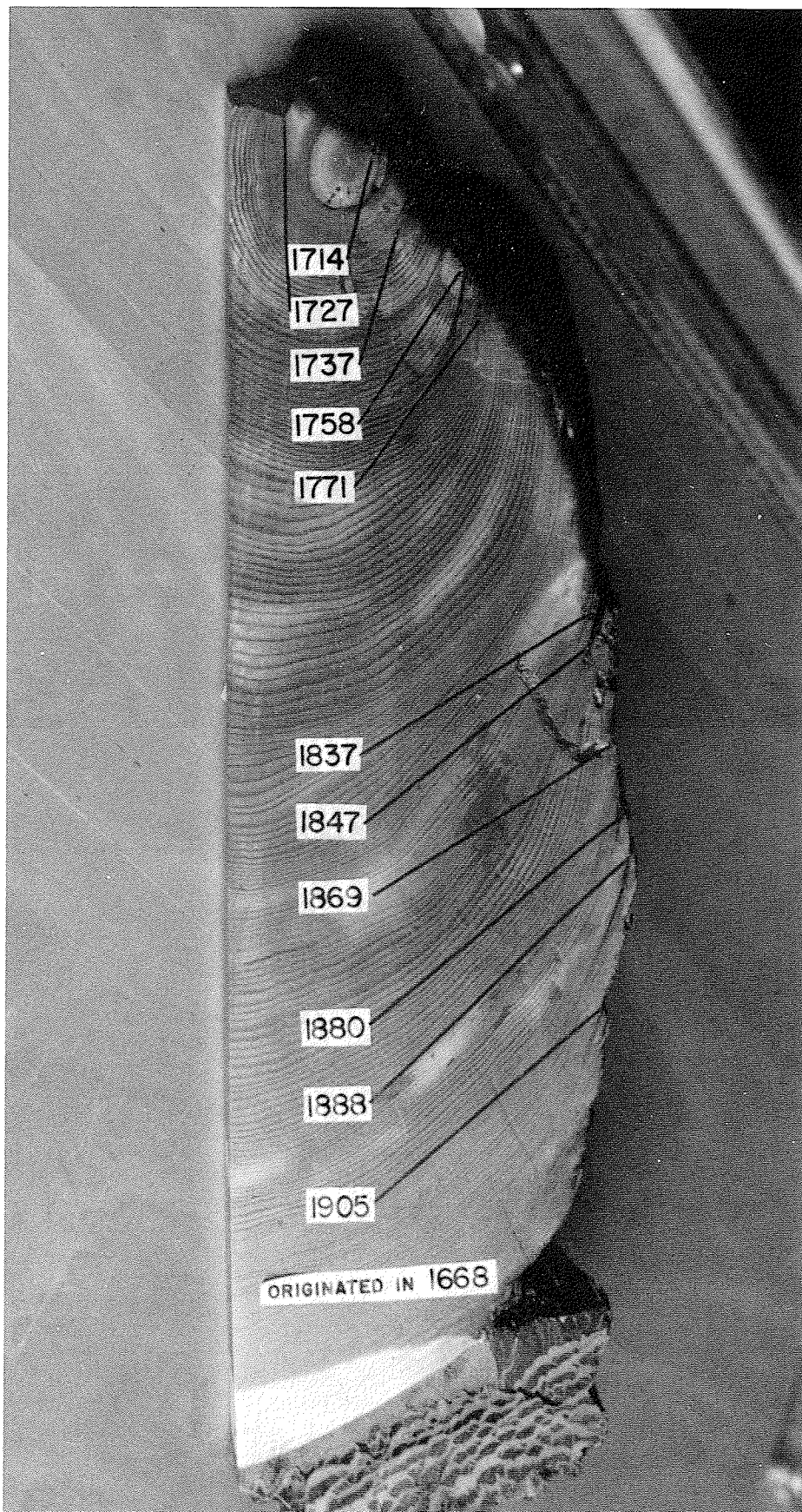
### Nominated by:

George LaRoi, Edmonton

This section from a 316-year-old Douglas-fir graphically illustrates the ability of the species to withstand fire. Each line (with associated date) points to a fire scar. In other words, the tree has survived the onslaught of no less than eleven fires during its lifetime. The tree was discovered by G.F. Tande (now of Fairbanks, Alaska) during fieldwork for his Master of Science thesis (Botany Department, University of Alberta) in 1975-76.

Douglas-fir has developed an adaptive feature which provides it with a major advantage over competing trees: a thick, corky, fire-resistant bark on the lower trunk. The major advantage, of course, is the ability to survive fires. A second advantage is that fires remove underbrush and other competing vegetation in the process, thus allowing the trees to grow uninhibited. The frequent surface burns help to create the familiar open park-like conditions under the stands of Douglas-fir.

This section of the tree was removed almost entirely from a dead, unproductive portion of the trunk. The Fire Fir is still standing and growing (perhaps to survive yet another fire) in Jasper National Park.



### Garneau's Tree

**Species:**

Manitoba maple

*Acer negundo*

**Location:**

Edmonton

**Nominated by:**

A.D. Hall, Ottawa

Garneau's Tree is a living memorial to Laurent Garneau and his wife who were early pioneers in Alberta. It is growing near the southwest corner of 111th Street and Saskatchewan Drive in Edmonton. At its foot is a plaque with the likenesses of Laurent and Eleanor Garneau who homesteaded the property in 1874, and planted the Manitoba maple which survives today.

Laurent Garneau was born in 1840 at Bay's Mills, near Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. He was the son of an Ojibway mother and a French-Canadian fur trader who worked for the old North West Company. Following in his father's footsteps, Laurent teamed up with two companions to fur trade on the Missouri. After many adventures and hardships, he joined up with Metis buffalo hunters who eventually found their way to Fort Garry, Manitoba. It was there he met his future wife, Eleanor Thomas, who lived in the Scottish settlement of Kildonan. She spoke English and Gaelic, while Laurent spoke French and Ojibway.

Garneau was one of Louis Riel's soldiers in the Red River insurrection of 1869, and joined the westward migration of Metis that followed. He settled in Strathcona (now part of Edmonton) in 1874 where he took out his homestead. Garneau's Tree was planted at the rear of the original home. During this time, he worked for the Hudson's Bay Company as a charcoal burner, and later freighted to Athabasca. In 1901, the Garneau family moved to nearby St. Paul de Metis (now known as St. Paul). From there he carried on an active ranching and trading business. His original homestead was absorbed by the expanding city of Edmonton and the developing University of Alberta.



Laurent Garneau was active in commercial and community affairs. He ran in the 1913 election in the riding of St. Paul as an independent Liberal, but was defeated. He was a supporter of the Hon. Frank Oliver during his split with Premier A.C. Rutherford. Garneau was a true western pioneer from fur trader and plainsman to businessman and community leader.

In 1952, the City of Edmonton Archives and Landmarks Committee approved erection of a pedestal and plaque, subsequently located at the intersection of 90th Avenue and Saskatchewan Drive. The plaque bore these words: "Laurent Garneau, farmer, community organizer and musician, who acquired the property in 1874. His original home was on the lane at the rear of 11108 - 90 Avenue. A maple tree planted by him still grows there. Erected 1953."

At the same time that approval was given for this memorial, it was also approved to mark Garneau's Tree. This was not done until 1982 when a grant from the University of Alberta's Skarin Fund made it possible to fulfil this long-standing commitment.

Today, at the foot of Garneau's Tree is a metal marker with the etched likenesses of Laurent and Eleanor Thomas Garneau and the inscription, "Garneau's Tree. This tree, planted about 1874, marks the homestead of Laurent Garneau (1840-1921) after whom this part of the city is named."

## Hardisty Tree

### Species:

Manitoba maple  
*Acer negundo*

### Location:

Edmonton

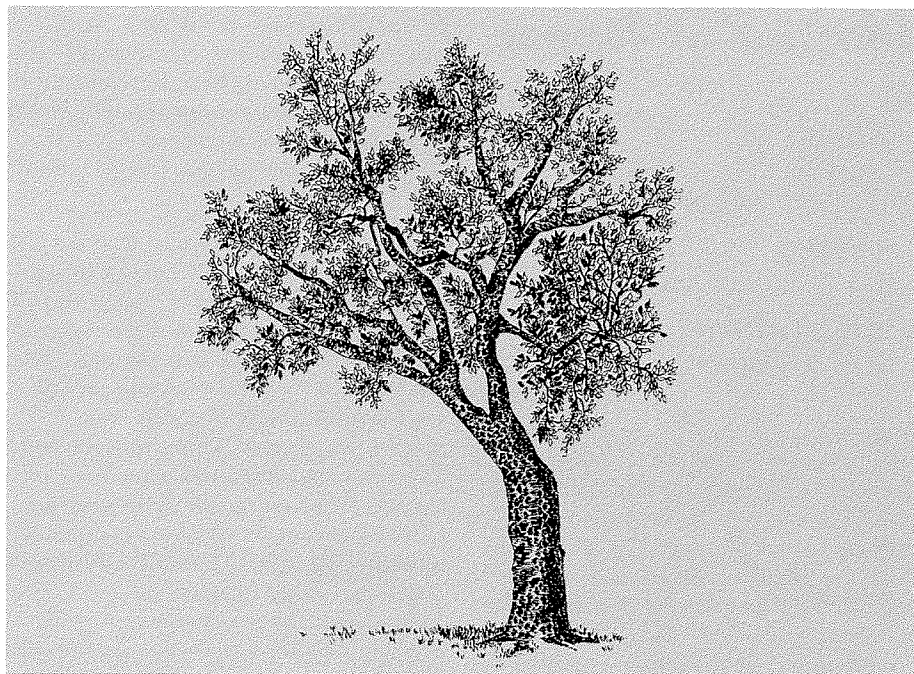
### Nominated by:

A.D. Hall, Ottawa

The Hardisty Tree was a Manitoba maple planted at old Fort Edmonton by Alberta pioneer and Hudson's Bay Company trader Richard Hardisty. It was planted with a row of maples along the north boundary of Chief Factor Hardisty's garden in 1875, and survived as its companions fell to old age or were uprooted to make way for the developing City of Edmonton and its new Legislative Building. The tree died in 1955, but not without a final struggle.

Richard G. Hardisty was born in 1831, probably at Eastmain near James Bay. His father at that time was a clerk (later chief factor) with the Hudson's Bay Company. Richard Hardisty Sr. and his wife, Marguerite, had six sons and four daughters. Of the sons, two became chief factors, two factors, and one a steamboat purser. Richard Jr. attained the highest position of all as the company-inspecting chief factor. One of the daughters married Chief Factor Donald A. Smith who was to become governor of the company and be named Lord Strathcona. The second son, William Lucas, was the father of Lady Loughheed of Calgary.

Richard Hardisty followed in the fur-trader steps of his father. After attending the River River Academy at Fort Garry, he entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1849 and progressed steadily with it, working out of Manitoba House, Cumberland House, Rocky Mountain House, Fort Carlton, Victoria and Edmonton. He was made chief factor at Edmonton House in 1872, and in 1887 was appointed inspection chief factor with duties extending from Moose Factory on James Bay, across the prairies and north to the mouth of the Mackenzie. That year, too, he was appointed first senator from Alberta. The Hon. Richard Hardisty died in 1889 from injuries



received earlier the same year during an inspection tour of the far-flung fur empire.

Richard Hardisty was renowned as a fur trader and factor, but he was also farsighted and progressive in many other ways. It was under his leadership that the Hudson's Bay Company became pioneer cattle ranchers in the Northwest soon after the last great southerly migration in 1878 of the rapidly diminishing buffalo herds. He was also responsible for building lumber and flour mills to serve the needs of increasing numbers of new pioneers venturing westward. He was widely respected by Indians, Metis and white people, and was a major influence in the development of the West.

In 1866 Richard Hardisty married Eliza Victoria McDougall, a daughter of the Rev. George McDougall. She was a remarkable woman in her own right, and was to outlive her husband by 40 years. At that time he was chief trader in charge of the post at Rocky Mountain House. Following other short-term postings, they settled down at Fort Edmonton in 1871 where Richard became chief factor the next year. They lived in "Rowands Folly", the 40-year-old big house built by the legendary John Rowand during his long reign as chief factor.

It was not long before a new imposing residence was built farther up the embankment, outside the fort pallisades. In 1873 the family moved into the

"Hardisty Big House" which was to become widely known for the warm welcomes given there to visiting friends and officials. The grounds of the residence got special attention, and in 1875 a row of Manitoba maples was planted along the north side of the garden.

No doubt some of these maples lived for many years, but time and construction took their toll. The Hardisty Big House stood until 1906 when it was destroyed by fire. In its place the new Legislative Building arose in 1912 with its east wing about where the home had been. The old buildings of the fort were demolished in 1915 as the capital grounds were landscaped. The surviving maple — the Hardisty maple — lived through all this until the new highways building was constructed near it in 1954. Even then it was given one more lease on life and was transplanted that winter to the southwest corner of the legislative building grounds. But it was too late and too old to be readily moved. The shock was great and it died soon after.

The Hardisty Tree lived through the most influential period of Richard Hardisty's productive career. For 65 years after his death, it was a living reminder of the part played by this great man in the building of the West. The tree, like the man, has found its place in Alberta's history.



# Lobstick at Jasper

### Species:

Douglas-fir

*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *glauca*

### Location:

Jasper National Park

### Nominated by:

A.D. Hall, Ottawa

There is a Lobstick Tree on the west bank of the Athabasca River, about 1.5 kilometres (one mile) north of the townsite of Jasper, along the Yellowhead Highway. It has been dead for at least 30 years, but is still standing beside a much larger, living tree from which most of the crown has broken off. The Lobstick — a Douglas-fir like its neighbour — can be readily identified since most of the lower branches had been cut off in the manner of marking such trees, and two railway spikes had been driven into the lower trunk. The tree is a record of historical significance.

A lobstick (or lopstick) according to **Webster's Third International Dictionary** is "a tree with branches trimmed so that it may serve as a landmark or memorial." A more complete description is found in **A Dictionary of Canadianisms** which notes that a lobstick is "a tall conspicuous spruce or pine denuded of all but its topmost branches to serve as a mark of honour for a friend, as a monument, or often as a living talisman of the man for whom it was made" or as a "landmark".

While the Jasper Lobstick was made by trimming all but the upper branches, other means of marking them included leaving the lower branches as well as the top while removing the limbs between, sometimes leaving live branches in the intervening space. The lower trunk often was blazed, engraved or otherwise marked. Lobsticks were found in the area north of the North Saskatchewan River and were usually made by northern Indians or Metis.

It is believed by many that the Lobstick at Jasper was cut in 1872 to mark the spot where Sir Sanford Fleming was to meet Walter Moberly who was in charge

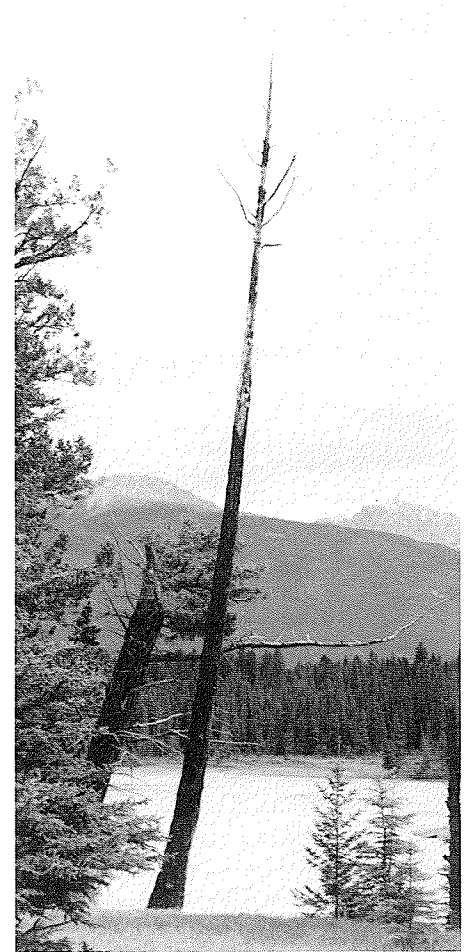
of the CPR survey in the area. At that time, a search for a transcontinental railway route through the Rockies was underway to fulfil a commitment to British Columbia which had entered Confederation the previous year.

A number of northern routes and passes were being investigated on the strong possibility that the railway would pass through Edmonton. Moberly was surveying from British Columbia through the Yellowhead Pass from the west, while Sir Sanford Fleming, chief engineer of the Canadian Pacific Railway, was approaching Jasper House from the east. Even though political and other considerations eventually resulted in the CPR transcontinental railway being built through Calgary and across the Kicking Horse and Rogers passes, the Yellowhead route recommended by Sir Sanford Fleming was chosen for the later construction in the early 1900s of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and Canadian Northern Railway, amalgamated in 1916 as the Canadian National.

There have been some suggestions that the Lobstick at Jasper was cut for other reasons, such as to mark a ford across the Athabasca River, but the railway spikes embedded in the trunk of the Lobstick help to support the former explanation.

There is another explanation for the Lobstick at Jasper. Ed Moberly, a highly respected guide and outfitter in the Rocky Mountains, refers to the tree as a symbol of truce between two Indian tribes. According to his oral history of the region during the last century, bands of Stoney and Cree Indians in the mid 1800s were camped some distance apart on the plains east of present-day Jasper.

The chief of the Stoney Indians, accompanied by four of his warriors, approached the camp of the Crees and made a truce. The two bands then moved closer together and continued to hunt in peace. Mr. Moberly recalls hearing of only two lobstick trees in the region — the other at Lobstick, on the Jasper-Edmonton trail. According to the history of the lobsticks, as passed down to him by his father, John Moberly, these were always pruned in the fashion of that at Jasper, and always marked a pledge of friendship or truce.



Ed Moberly with his family lived near the present site of the airport in Jasper Park when it was created in 1907, and were moved outside its boundaries to homestead grants east of Hinton where they have lived since that time.

Many other lobsticks were made in Alberta and northern Canada. Lobstick Creek, which appears on the Palliser map of 1865 was named after a tall lobstick on its bank which marked the spot where it crossed the trail leading from Edmonton to the Athabasca and Yellowhead passes. Alexander Mackenzie in his northern and western explorations observed a great number of trees, in different places, whose branches had been lopped off to the tops, as did many other early fur traders and adventurers in the Mid and Far North.

Lobsticks have marked the way or the stay of many trailblazers in Alberta's history. The Lobstick at Jasper is a significant sign post of the past.

# Medicine Tree

## Species:

Black cottonwood  
*Populus trichocarpa*

## Location:

Near High River

## Nominated by:

A.D. Hall, Ottawa

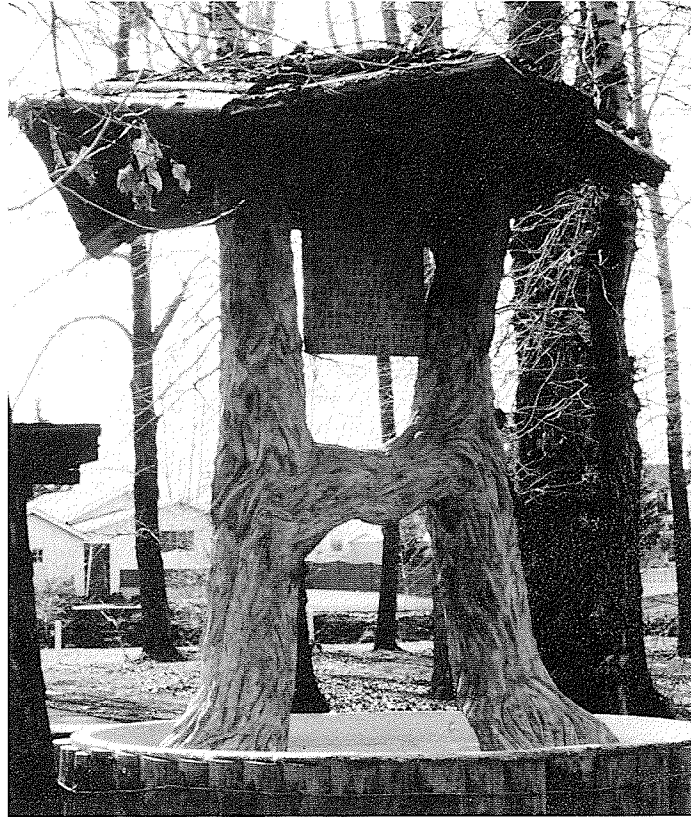
The Medicine Tree witnessed many changes in southern Alberta. Growing on the north bank of the Highwood River, just a few miles west of the present townsite of High River, the Medicine Tree was, in fact, two cottonwoods growing side by side and joined by a branch of one tree which had grafted to the trunk of the other about ten feet off the ground. It was well known to the Indians and white traders, and to settlers who followed. It blew down during a high wind in 1958.

The tree was considered by the Indians to have great powers. It flourished in the heart of Blackfoot territory, and many Indian bands camped close by because of the revered tree and the natural campsite afforded by the proximity of good water, ample grazing and wild game. At the foot of the tree, they offered gifts and prayers of thanks for the good fortune of hunting or warring parties, or sought help for the sick or wounded.

An early fur trader, Howell Harris, told Dan Riley (later Senator Riley) on whose 1883 homestead the tree grew, that when he first saw the Medicine Tree in the early 1870s the ground underneath was trodden bare. Beside it were gifts of tobacco twists, trinkets and bundles left for the Great Spirit.

Because Indians often camped close to their Medicine Tree, it had an indirect role in a less savoury part of the history of the province. From 1869 to 1873, free traders from the United States moved into the territory and tried to take trade away from the Hudson's Bay Company whose presence was waning. Whiskey was openly and freely offered in exchange for furs.

The American traders built over a dozen trading posts in this time and these "whiskey posts" had colourful names such



as Fort Whoop-Up (near Lethbridge), Standoff, and Slide-Out. Fort Spitzee was built during the winter of 1869-70 by the T.C. Powers Company on the north side of the Highwood River, about one mile west of the Medicine Tree. A year or so later another fort was built nearby by free traders, Akers and Johnson, on the south side of the river about two miles downstream from the tree.

In 1871, a third fort was put up about 75 yards from the Medicine Tree by Howell Harris for the I.G. Baker Company. This five-year period had a devastating effect on the Indians, and was a major reason for the establishment of the North West Mounted Police in 1873 and their historic march across the Prairies one year later to establish Fort Macleod.

Development of the area around the Medicine Tree began in earnest when ranching got underway in the late 1870s in that part of the Northwest Territories which was to become southern Alberta. Rental leases for open grazing were set at one cent an acre in 1881, and increased in certain areas to two cents per acre five years later.

Cattle ranching got underway on a grand scale. Pioneer ranchers developed large herds and adopted uniquely Canadian styles — often combining the range expertise of the American West with the more genteel customs of landed English gentry. By the turn of the century, homesteaders started to move in and build fences which cut off cattle from valuable feeding grounds. The decline of the great Canadian cattle empires was capped by a disastrously cold winter in 1906-07 which decimated large herds and marked the end of an era.

The Medicine Tree presided over these great changes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, surviving to witness the High River area become the centre of a prosperous farming and ranching country. When the tree blew down in 1958, residents of the town salvaged part of its great trunk and main branch, and took them to George Lane Memorial Park where they built a display shelter for the remains.

Here also a smaller scale replica of the Medicine Tree was erected to remind all visitors to High River of the important pages of Alberta history which had been turned during the life of this historic tree.

### Pangman's Pine

**Species:**

Probably Lodgepole pine

*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*

**Location:**

Near the confluence of the North Saskatchewan and Clearwater rivers

**Nominated by:**

A.D. Hall, Ottawa

Pangman's Tree (or Pangman's Pine) was an historic Alberta tree named after early fur trader, Peter Pangman, who carved his name on it in 1790. It was located on the north bank of the North Saskatchewan river, 4.5 miles above the mouth of the Clearwater River and three miles above the first of five trading posts which would be erected at Rocky Mountain House beginning in 1799.

Alexander Henry the younger, a fur trader of the North West Company, when he saw the tree on November 9, 1810, noted in his famous journals that it was "the spot where we get the clay to whitewash our houses, the best I have seen in the country", and that the rising ground where the tree grew "was then the utmost extent of discoveries on the Saskatchewan towards the Rocky Mountains".

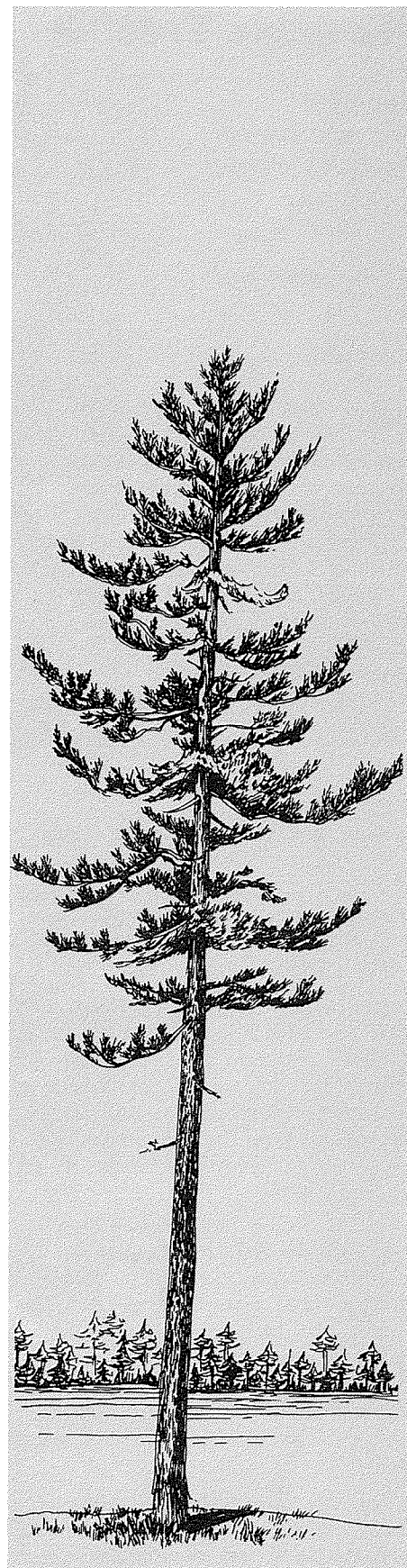
Peter Pangman was one of the intrepid pioneer fur traders who opened up the North and West frontiers. Born in New England about 1744, and early engaged in the fur trade, his name appears in 1767 in the Michilimackinac licences as trading to the Mississippi, and from 1774 to 1790 he was mainly occupied on the Saskatchewan River. He worked with various partners. In the spring of 1784 he went to Grand Portage as a member of a company that had a claim to partnership in the formation of the North West Company. But since no provision had been made for his alliance, he went on to Montreal where he joined Gregory, McLeod & Company, a competitor.

Pangman and John Ross established a trading post for his new partners at Grand Portage in 1785. Two years later, the McLeod partnership was absorbed by the North West Company, and Pangman was finally united with this great association of independent traders. It was while he was a member of the Northwesters that Pangman journeyed up the Saskatchewan to within sight of the Rocky Mountains, where he blazed the tree which would bear his name and serve as an historic landmark to Alexander Henry, David Thompson and other early visitors to the area.

Pangman retired from the fur trade in 1793, buying the seigneurie of Mascouche in Lower Canada where he lived the life of a prosperous gentleman until he died in 1819.

Peter Pangman was one of that select group who have contributed much to the development and romance of early Canada. In his fur trading activities he was resourceful, daring and strong-minded. He ventured into lands still unexplored by white people, and left his mark on Alberta and Canada.

When this trader and adventurer carved his name and the year on Pangman's Tree in 1790, the pine must then have been of considerable size and age. It survived as a living historic reference point for another 133 years until it was cut down in 1923 during a logging operation. Peter Pangman's contribution to early exploration and trade has been widely recorded. The tree named after him has its own special niche in the annals of this pioneer fur trader.





# Pine That Was Napi

## Species:

Probably Lodgepole pine  
*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*

## Location:

Somewhere on the banks of the Highwood river

## Nominated by:

A.D. Hall, Ottawa

The Pine That Was Napi is said to be still standing, somewhere along the banks of the Highwood River. It is difficult to say exactly where, since the tree is reported in the legends of the Blood Indians, and its location has not been recorded precisely. To learn more about the tree, it is necessary to learn more about the legends of Napi as passed down from one generation to another by the wise old men of this Indian tribe.

The old man of legend was called Napi by the Blood Indians. He was sometimes called Ke-nue-a-cah-atsis by the Piegans, Me-ki-ki-a by the Blackfeet, and different names by other tribes. Early in time, after the great flood, women and men lived separately in two different camps. Napi had taught the women to skin buffalo and tan their hides, where to find wild edible berries, how to make wooden bowls and dishes, and many other ways to make their life better. The men, however, he had taught to hunt, but not how to prepare food properly, or how to live in comfort. When Napi visited the chief woman and told her that he came from a camp of men, she was much interested and asked him to invite them to her camp.

The visit is described by R.N. Wilson in his papers containing extensive information about the life and legends of the Indians of Alberta:

When they had all arrived, he (Napi) stood them in a row outside of the women's camp, and the female dressed herself up in torn clothes, and covered her apron with dirt, and went towards the waiting men, for it had been decided that each woman would choose a husband, and she disguised

herself so as to test Napi, to whom she at once advanced, and taking him by the hands, tried to lead him off. But 'no', Napi cried, 'Go away you dirty woman, I will not marry you.' She caught him and held him hard but he struggled and broke away, at which she became angered and returning to her lodge dressed up in her finest garb and ornaments, and again came towards Napi who admired her beauty and fine clothes and cried, 'O what a fine woman. How I would like to marry her.' She came right up to him and he was sure that his wish was about to be gratified when she turned and going past him chose another and said to her followers: 'Each one of you choose a husband, but let none take Napi, he of the wolf clothes, he refused me when I was in rags and dirt and now he will remain single.' They each chose a husband and left him standing alone. In his rage he tore open their buffalo pound and stood on its site, transforming himself into a pine tree where it stands yet.

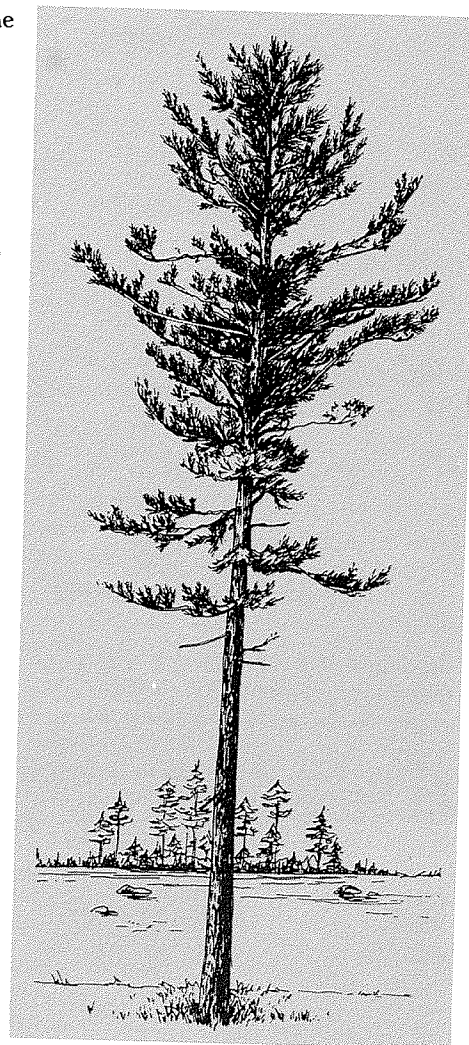
Because the legends of Napi were passed by word of mouth from one generation to another, the details vary, depending upon the teller, but the essential account remains the same. Mike Mountain Horse, in **My People the Bloods**, recorded that when the chief woman was refused by Napi when she was dressed in rags, and when she in turn spurned him when she returned in her finery, she shook her fist at him and said, "You have made me ashamed in the eyes of all other women by not coming with me when I chose you for a husband. Now you will remain standing on that spot, but not as Napi, for I will prepare a charm which will turn you into a pine tree." And this huge pine tree is still standing in solitude somewhere along the banks of the Highwood River. This version is repeated by Johnny Chinook in his **Tales of the Canadian West**.

A more precise location and a somewhat different interpretation of the pine tree was written by Adolf Hungry Wolf in **The Blood People**. In this interpretation, the author had read the account of the wedding from the R.N. Wilson papers to Mokaking, a wise old teacher. Mokaking had made some changes to Wilson's version of the outcome of the wedding between the

braves and the women. According to Mokaking, after the chief of the women had turned Napi aside, "Napi was left alone while all the others became husbands and wives. For many centuries a large pine tree stood at the women's buffalo jump. People said that it was the ghost of Napi mourning because he had no wife." In this account, the women's buffalo jump was described as being in the Rocky Mountain foothills, west of Claresholm.

Many are the stories about Napi and his part in the religion and legends of the Blood people. Their culture, as well as the more recent white culture, is enriched through better awareness of the ways of those who lived in the West long before the recent coming of the fur traders, settlers and ranchers.

The Pine That Was Napi is a unique tree with a special place in Alberta's history.



### Pinto Lake Trees

**Species:**

Lodgepole pine

*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*

**Location:**

Pinto Lake (near White Goat  
Wilderness area)

**Nominated by:**

T.C. Loblaw, Nordegg

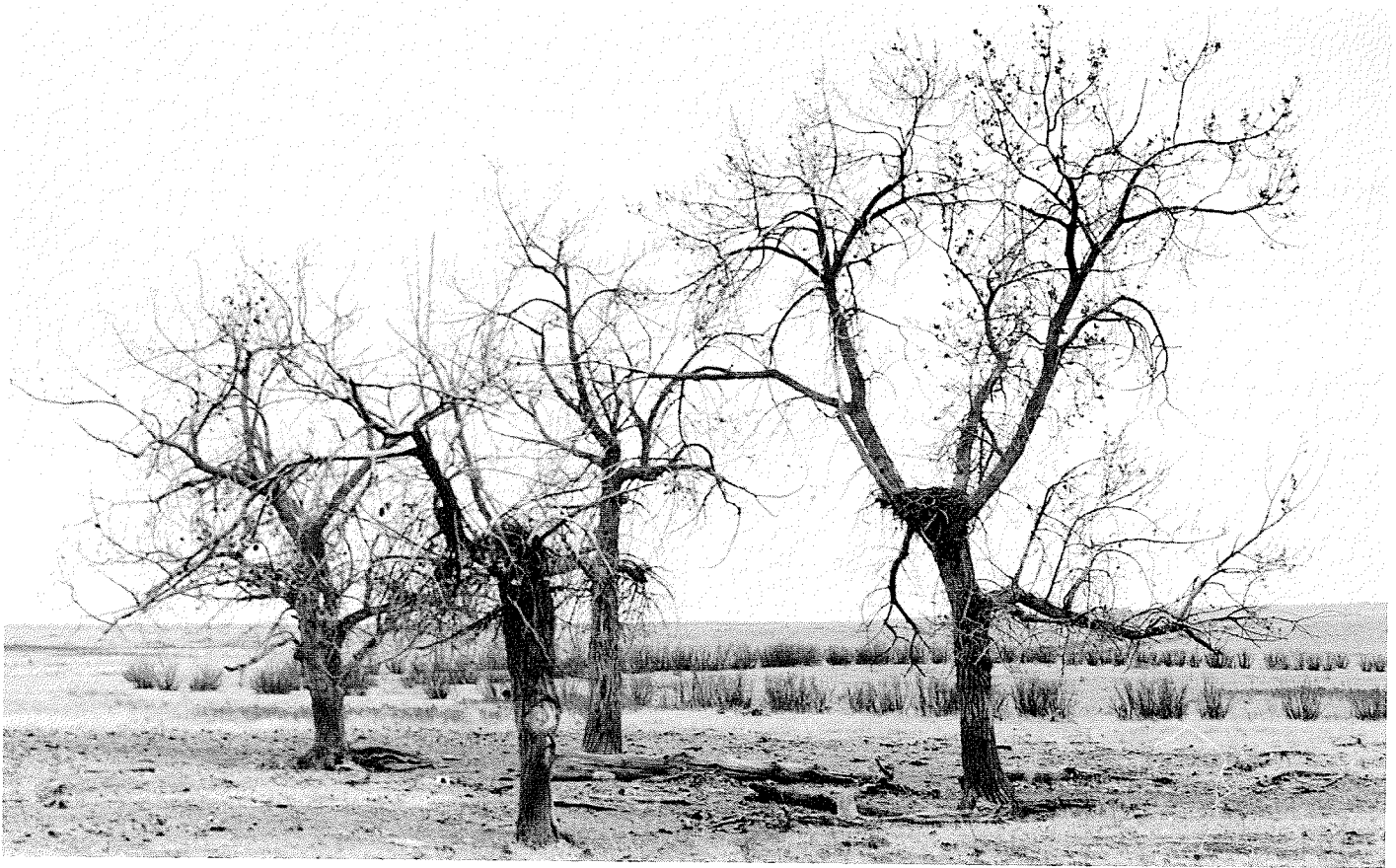
In the fall of 1923, Frank Pierce, his wife, daughter Maxine, and one cow moved out to his trapline cabin located on the east shore of Pinto Lake, headwaters of the White Goat River, later renamed the Cline.

During early winter, tragedy struck. Frank Pierce accidentally shot himself in the arm with a shotgun. Because of complications and the remoteness of the area, Mrs. Pierce was forced to amputate his arm. The family was then forced to remain where they were with no hope of getting out at least for the entire winter. Through it all, the remarkable Mrs. Pierce was able to carry on as doctor, nurse and family provider until someone chanced upon them.

In early June of 1924, the nearly impossible happened when the family was discovered by a party of natives. The natives in turn notified authorities in Nordegg, where a rescue party was quickly formed. The rescue party, consisting of three officers of the Alberta Provincial Police named English, Holmes, and Watson, removed the Pierce family on June 24, 1924.

The inscriptions carved by the rescuers are monuments which still stand to one family's brush with fate and their spirit to carry on.





## Sentinel Trees

### Species:

Plains cottonwood

*Populus deltoides* var. *occidentalis*

### Location:

North of Enchant

### Nominated by:

Mrs. Guri Opstad, Lethbridge

The Sentinel Trees were a gift from the drylands to a girl of the Alberta Prairies for several wonderful years of childhood. How they came to be there was of no concern to a child of the plains who loved them secretly and silently for their beauty. That was way back between 1916 and 1923.

At that time, the little girl's Sentinel Trees were a landmark known to all the homesteaders for miles around the community. The little girl moved into a house built in 1904 by a wealthy philanthropist, carpenter and rancher of the Kinnondale area, formerly from California, named Salisbury. The Salisbury house was directly across the

fence from the Sentinel Trees, and neighbours used to tie their only child to one of the trees by their backyard gate to keep the little boy from wandering off.

The area in those times was coyote country but, with such fine trees to keep a fellow home, the parents did not need to watch over their baby at all times. They could leave him safely and happily in the shade of a Sentinel where the girl who loved the trees came to play with the boy next door.

Those enduring sentinels have lasted for four eras since they were planted by some enterprising immigrant during the heyday of the transient American ranchers. These men moved north from the United States for summer pasture to feed the growing herds of the western cattle kings but were later crowded out by the inrush of homesteaders.

Through all this, the trees by the Salisbury house flourished on the drylands of Kinnondale, where no other trees existed at the time. As far as one could see in all directions, and the view was extensive, there were naught but the little girl's Sentinel Trees, alone and superb.

Even in 1975, the trees still endured remarkably well. The settlement had long since been replaced by open plain because most of the original settlers had moved out by 1925. The area was now a vast community pasture, but the trees remained, mute sentinels of the open plains. The trees which had witnessed the cattle barons, the wild horse bands and the settling of the West, guided the little girl, long since grown up, back to the place they had always charmed for her when she was young.

Irrigation is shrinking the drylands of Kinnondale. As cattle have uprooted much of the Sentinels' roots, they are giving way to time. Still standing on the open plain north of Enchant, these noble Sentinels certainly belong in a history of trees for they are surely among the hardiest of trees on the drylands of southern Alberta.

Give me trees, oh, give me these.  
Give me sunlight give me moonlight,  
Give me trees, leaves a flutter  
And a whisper in the breeze.  
Oh, give me trees.

— Guri Opstad



### Simpson's Register

**Species:**

Unknown

**Location:**

Banff — Natural History Museum,  
Parks Canada

**Nominated by:**

A.D. Hall, Ottawa

Many historic events in Alberta's history are recorded in tree blazes. One of particular interest is known as Simpson's Blaze or Simpson's Register.

Simpson's Register has the inscription "GS JR 1841". The initials were carved in a living tree on a "blaze", the flat surface made with an axe on the trunk to serve as marker or record for those who followed. The initials stand for Sir George Simpson and John Rowand, and the year the tree was blazed was 1841.

At that time Sir George was governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and John Rowand was chief factor of Edmonton House, the company's fur headquarters for all the Western Prairies. The blaze was found on a tree at Shuswap (now Simpson) Pass at a point where it crossed the Continental Divide. It was made when the two traders and explorers passed through in 1841 on a trip which originated in Fort Garry, and which was to take Simpson right around the world and Rowand as far west as the Hawaiian Islands.

Simpson's Register was found in 1904 by Lade Brewster, wife of Jim Brewster of the well-known Brewster family so closely identified with the Banff area. In his book **Weathered Wood**, F.O. Brewster described how Lade had accompanied his brother Jim on a hunting trip in the Simpson Pass area. While the men were hunting, Lade stayed around camp, and one day noticed a tree which had fallen, almost hiding a distinctive blaze with markings on the side facing the ground. The importance of the blaze was recognized, and it was cut from the dead tree.



Simpson's Register, as it came to be called, was kept by Jim Brewster for many years as a prized possession among his famous game trophies. It was subsequently donated by Mr. Joe Brewster to the Natural History Museum, Parks Canada, in Banff for safekeeping.

# Stockdale Maple

## Species:

Manitoba maple

*Acer negundo*

## Location:

Provost

## Nominated by:

Colleen Ferry, Provost

This Manitoba maple is unusual mostly for its association with an Eaton's mail order house built by James Stockdale of Provost, Alberta, in 1918.

Mr. Stockdale came from England in 1909, homesteading on a quarter section near Provost. When he married, it was eventually found that the old homestead shack was too small to contain his new family. With that in mind he purchased, for the grand sum of \$833.81, a house package from the 1917-18 Eaton's Building Supplies Catalogue. The package was shipped from Eaton's in Winnipeg to Provost by railroad, and was then built on a foundation of rocks gathered locally.

Upon completion of the house, protection was needed from the constant, harsh prairie winds. One of the shelterbelt trees, a Manitoba maple, received a choice spot close to the front porch. Through drought, hail, wind, insects and hard times the maple grew. One branch provided a swing for the children, another dipped towards the upstairs window, providing shade and an unique but adequate fire escape. Stories say the branch was also handy as a means for the farmer's daughters to slip down from the upstairs window, and meet their sweethearts on the front porch.

The unusual growth of this tree not only proved useful but also provided an interesting sight when viewed from a distance. It initially bends to the east so as not to damage the house, then swings back to the west to protect it. The tree and the house complement each other like two elderly prairie matrons.



### Superior Lodgepole Pine

**Species:**

Lodgepole pine

*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia*

**Location:**

Grande Prairie

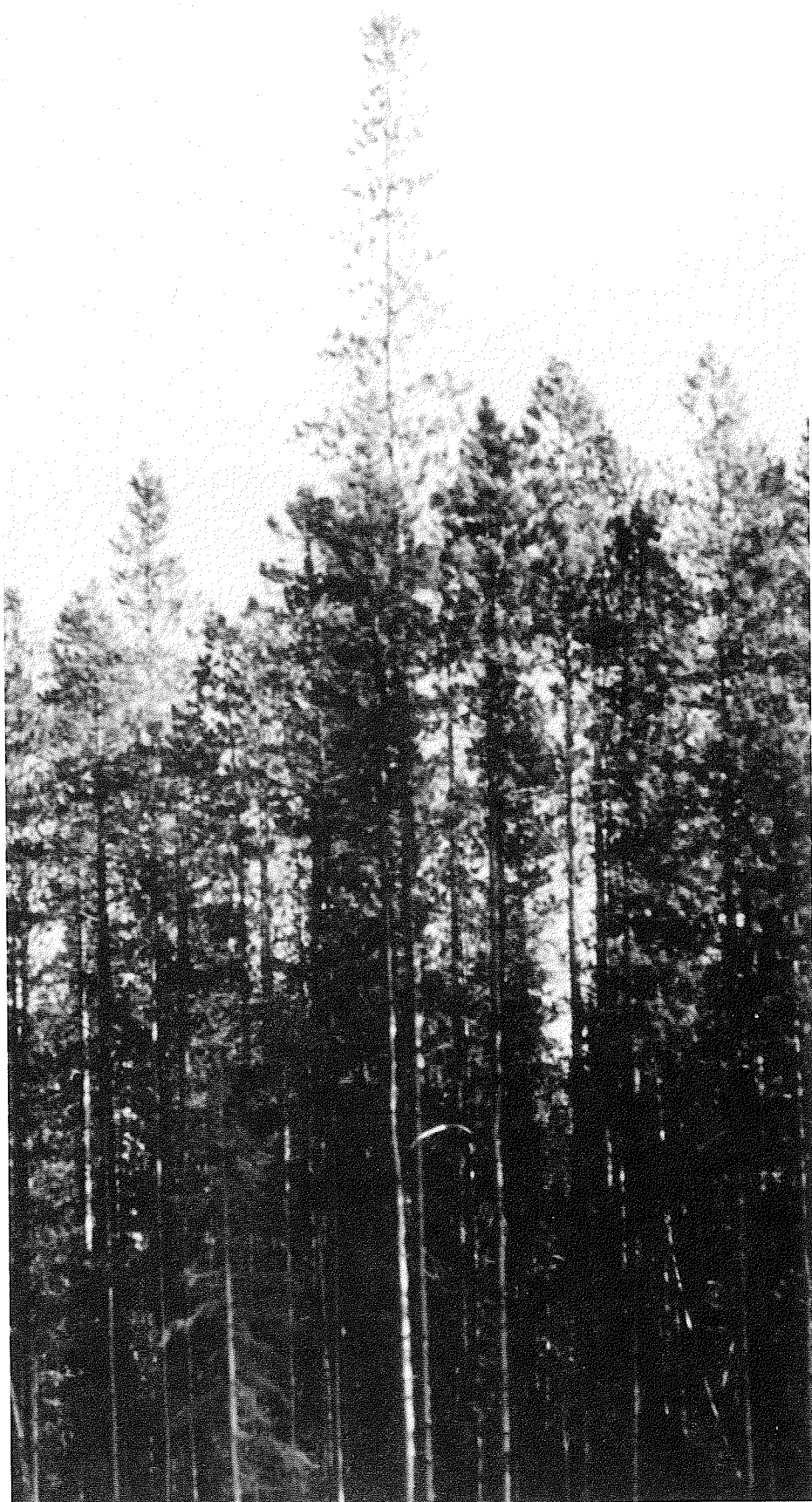
**Nominated by:**

C.A. Dermott, Edmonton

This Lodgepole pine could well have been the fastest growing pine in Alberta. It was discovered by the Reforestation and Reclamation Branch, Alberta Forest Service, as part of its program to identify genetically superior trees for use in the improvement of forest growing stock.

What set this tree apart from its neighbours is that it was 48 per cent higher (22 metres in height) and 40 per cent bigger around (26.2 centimetres diameter at breast height). The amazing thing about this is that the tree at age 69 was actually four to eight years younger than its fellows. Such a tree has the potential to be extremely valuable as a source of genetically superior seed which can be used to significantly increase timber production.

Before this tree was felled, the Alberta Forest Service carefully followed its life, and studied cuttings to determine whether it could ultimately be used as a source for future superior trees.





# Tall Spruce

## Species:

White spruce

*Picea glauca* (Moench) Voss

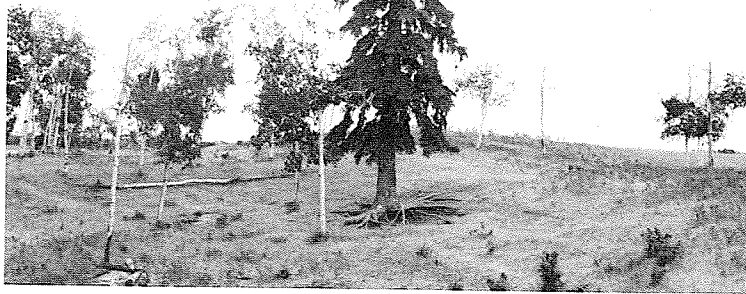
## Location:

Near Mirror, Alberta

## Nominated by:

Margaret McLeod, Edmonton  
and A.D. Hall, Ottawa

The Tall Spruce grows in the Ripley district near Mirror, Alberta. A landmark to the early settlers in the region, it is a treasured landmark still. Standing about 23 metres (75 feet) high, this tree can readily be found by driving about three kilometres (two miles) south of Mirror on Highway 21, and then east about 1.5 kilometres (one mile) along the sideroad which goes "to the narrows", a popular local picnic site. The tree is about 60 metres (200 feet) south of this road.



The Tall Spruce has witnessed many changes. Early in its life, it was seen by wandering Cree Indians whose trails led to nearby Buffalo Lake and the Red Deer River. They had a camp just eight kilometres (five miles) southwest, near present-day Alix, where they caught fish coming from the lake. Not far to the south was the land of the Blackfoot, and no doubt warring parties of both tribes passed many times within sight of the Tall Spruce. Close, too, was the town of Tail Creek where the creek by that name enters the Red Deer River. Here was one of the largest Metis settlements in the west where up to 400 hunters gathered in the years before 1877 when the last great buffalo hunt took place in the region. It was not long afterwards that the town itself virtually disappeared when a prairie fire swept through and burned most of the cabins.

In 1883, Matthew Cook, a well-educated, English-born land dealer, built a cabin close to Buffalo Lake in the area which later would be known as the Tall Spruce District. Here he brought his wife and their three sons and daughter Kate. In 1890, another Englishman, James Brindle, built a cabin about 1.5 kilometres (one mile) east of the Cook home on Buffalo Lake, and in 1897 married Kate Cook.

About this time the area immediately to the west was also being settled. Yet another Englishman, Edward Parlyby, who had been ranching at Wolf Creek west of the present town of Ponoka, moved eastward about 1890 and with his brother Walter took up permanent settlement. The community which today embraces Clive, Tees, Alix, Mirror and Lamberton soon grew from these and other early settlers. In the 1890s and early 1900s, many new families moved in. The first to come were the English, followed soon by homesteaders from the United States where free land had largely been taken up, and by newcomers from the East and from Europe.

The locality in which the Tall Spruce stands shared the general growth of the Western Prairies. In 1891 the total white and Metis population of the future province of Alberta was estimated at 17,593. By 1895, it had grown to about 30,000; by 1901, to 73,000; and by 1906, to 185,412. Almost 70 per cent of the people then in Alberta were living on homestead lands and the remainder in towns. The coming of the railroad and strong federal government immigration policies had brought about this relatively rapid increase in settlement.

The Tall Spruce continued to grow

steadily as changes took place in the district of Ripley and throughout Alberta. In 1902, Bob and Jemima Curr took a homestead on the same quarter as the Tall Spruce. It was treasured by this pioneer family, and by all those who occupied the land in later years. It has stood proudly as droughts, depression, two world wars and technology have wrought their changes on the people and the countryside.

A poem written by Ella Jane Jewell honours this much loved tree. It begins:

The tall old spruce still stands  
Where it has stood beyond man's  
memory.

The earliest settlers saw it reaching  
towards the sky  
And knew the area as the district of  
'The Tall Spruce Tree'...

And ends:

...Let it go on standing,,  
A landmark, joining the past and  
present to the years to be.

The 100th anniversary of the coming of the first white settler to the district of the Tall Spruce is 1983. It is also the 80th anniversary of the school district of Ripley. Through all that time the tree has been silent witness to great change. What is yet to come?

### Tree-in-the-Road

**Species:**

White spruce

*Picea glauca* (Moench) Voss

**Location:**

Highway 1A near Banff

**Nominated by:**

A.D. Hall, Ottawa

Not many trees win the battle for survival when they stand in the way of new roads under construction. But in Alberta, one did. This tree still stands today in a little island of green left when a road was divided to spare a magnificent spruce growing squarely in the path of road construction. It can be found about 19 kilometres (12 miles) west of Banff, right in the centre of Highway 1A as it bends towards Lake Louise. The Tree-in-the-Road has become a familiar landmark to visitors to this popular national park.

The Tree-in-the-Road was saved in 1947 during construction of a section of what was then the Trans-Canada Highway. As described by Senator Donald Cameron in his book **The Impossible Dream**, he and Major P.J. Jennings, who was then superintendent of Banff National Park, first noted the great tree when they were travelling the old highway at a place where road work was underway. Survey lines marked the new location, and grading was about to begin. Lying squarely in line with the proposed clearing was a towering spruce, fair of shape and great in size. Could this beautiful specimen not be saved?

There were many reasons why the tree should come down. The position of the new road had already been decided and staked out. The only alternative to curving the road around the tree was to split the two-lane highway to leave a central oasis, and this would surely create a traffic hazard. There were many arguments as to why the tree must go. Yet it was a truly outstanding spruce and, after all, were national parks not meant to save some notable examples of the natural world even if this required actions not normal or even possible outside park boundaries?



The tree won out. The road was split. The mighty spruce was left to grow in a green patch bracketed by the embracing arms of the divided highway. Since that time it has been admired by many visitors. A traffic problem has not developed, and the Tree-in-the-Road stands as a living monument to the unique values of the national park system, and to those who developed it.

The Alberta Forestry Association is a working partnership made up of individuals, companies and governments, all of whom are vitally interested in, and dedicated to, maintaining Alberta's forests as a productive and renewable resource.

Because of the unusual blending of its membership, the Alberta Forestry Association (AFA) reflects the different viewpoints of forest environmentalists and conservationists, recreational users, timber harvesters and tree growers, educators and governmental planners and managers of the forest resource.

AFA has its roots in the Canadian Forestry Association, of which it is a member. The Canadian Forestry Association (CFA) was formed in 1900, with strong western support for forest conservation action. CFA is one of the oldest environmental groups in Canada.

Underlying everything the Alberta Forestry Association does is the desire to increase public awareness and understanding. The Association is trying to bring about a better understanding of the forest among Albertans of all ages and backgrounds. It sees the forest as a living entity, not just a mass of trees, but a complex ecosystem in which the inhabitants are born, live, have good times and bad, and finally die, with new generations coming after to renew the process.

## Association Objectives

- Working in full co-operation with any industry, association, public group, or individual, sharing our concern for the forest resource;
- Serving as an educational resource to the school system, helping to provide Alberta students with the most up-to-date information possible on this important renewable resource;
- Promoting widespread public awareness of Alberta's forest resources: their present and future importance, their protection from wildlife and other destructive forces, user conflicts and issues, and the skills and value of planned forest management;
- Serving as a sounding board for public concerns regarding present and future uses of Alberta's forests;
- Taking a leadership role in developing common objectives and appropriate co-operation among the various groups which use Alberta's forests;
- Helping people enjoy and look after Alberta's trees and forests.

## An Objective View

Because AFA membership is made up of tree growers and tree harvesters, conservationists and environmentalists, planners for future growth and planners for today's timber harvesting, hunters, bird watchers, recreationalists, profit-producing forest industry managers and governmental long-range planners, it has access to the thinking of everyone concerned with the forest resource. This broad perspective permits the Association to make important contributions to the management and use of Alberta's forests in the future.

## Telling the Story in the Classroom

The Association has brought the forest conservation story to classrooms throughout the province for many years. AFA school programs, for both junior and senior grades, have helped develop attitudes and understanding about the living forest — and Alberta teachers have applauded our efforts.

## Increasing Public Awareness

The Alberta Forestry Association helps people understand and appreciate the important role of trees in their lives — and in their landscapes. In this important work, Alberta's newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations have been very helpful. AFA's Trees of Renown project is one which has generated considerable public interest.

## Membership

AFA needs your help — to help Alberta's forests help you! Anyone interested in the future of Alberta's forests may become a member of AFA. Contact the Executive Director at the following address:

**Alberta Forestry Association  
Suite 311  
10526 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5J 1Z5**

**Telephone: (403) 428-7582**

AFA is registered by Revenue Canada as a charitable organization and, as such, is able to provide receipts for tax-deductible membership donations.



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