



## President's Report

### Greetings from the beautiful Rocky Mountains

Summer is gone and winter is upon us. We have packed up camps and are now in the throes of trapping season. Our summer was thwarted with many issues that ranged from an impending pine beetle infestation -- to constant rain -- to tremendous blow-down.

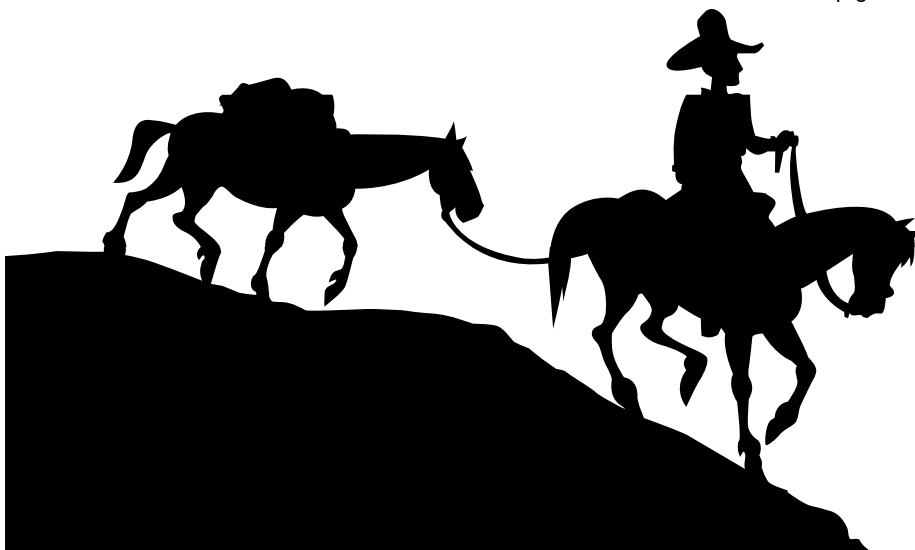
First I want to let you know that there was a great effort by Alberta Forest Services and Parks & Protected Areas to deal with an impending pine beetle outbreak. Significant pine beetle infestations were discovered in both Willmore Wilderness Park and the adjacent Kakwa Wildland Park. I had a chance to fly to the upper Sheep Creek area on the Continental Divide in a helicopter to view the department's Burn Control Program. I saw the hard work both departments were doing to contain the pine beetle from spreading. Our Foundation plans to continue working collaboratively, providing both departments with assistance, regarding the threat.

The Foundation hosted many trips in the summer and fall of 2005. The trips were auctioned off at the Edmonton and Grande Prairie conventions to generate revenue. It was a big task for Susan and me to honour all of the commitments, which resulted in the donation of our outfit's resources and a big segment of our summer.

Our first trip was in May and we took Ruth and Angelo Blais and four friends on a three-day trip to Kvass Flats. The trip had been purchased at the 1st Willmore Wilderness Annual Fundraiser in St. Albert in 2004.

In June we had several shorter trail rides. Chuck Stojan of Stojan's Power Sports & Marine in Sexsmith had purchased a Raft 'n Ride for his staff. Chuck's father was Jerry Stojan, a Willmore outfitter in the 1960's. Also in June, Shirley McFall and three companions participated in a Bed n' Breakfast 'n Trail Ride weekend. Jack Hum and Bea Gregoire also joined us for the Raft 'n Ride 'n Dine with celebrity host John Berry. I wish to thank EJ's Roost Bed and Breakfast, Wild Blue Yonder Rafting and John Berry for their generous donations.

continued on page 4



### Inside this issue:

From the Executive Director	2
Mountain Pine Beetle	3
President's Report Continued	4
Willmore Wanderings	5
Hargreaves Brothers	6 & 7
Membership Information	8
Memoirs of Willmore	9
2006 Convention	9
Hornets Horses & Muskeg	10
On The Trail Again	11
Burro Racer Visits Willmore	12

### Special Points of Interest:

#### 2006 Conventions

- 3rd Willmore Wilderness Annual Fundraiser  
Edmonton Coast Terrace Inn  
Edmonton on April 22 2006.  
The event will be held in the Ball Room.  
Dinner tickets are \$60.00 per person.  
Cocktails at 5 pm and Dinner at 6 pm'
- 2nd 'Willmore Wilderness Wingding'  
Grande Prairie March 4, 2006  
Grande Prairie at the Quality Inn  
Cocktails at 5 pm & Dinner at 6 pm.  
Tickets are \$50.00 per person.
- 1st 'Willmore Wilderness Shindig'  
Edson January 28, 2006  
Edson Royal Canadian Legion.  
Cocktails at 5 pm & Dinner at 6 pm.  
Tickets are \$50.00 per person.

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## Views from Sheep Creek

Brian Bildson - Executive Director



As I write this,  
the moon's golden reflection  
is glistening  
in the silver night waters  
of Sheep Creek ...

It makes it difficult  
to concentrate on writing,  
as my eyes are drawn  
to the window,  
and the night scene  
that shines in the moonlight.

As I write this, the moon's golden reflection is glistening in the silver night waters of the Sheep Creek. It makes it difficult to concentrate on writing, as my eyes are drawn to the window, and the night scene that shines in the moonlight. Somehow it seems fitting to write about the Willmore Wilderness Foundation in a place like this.

The Foundation has a wide cross section of members, which is one of its biggest strengths. We all share a passion for the wilderness and value this special place, which has somehow survived. Some of our members are occasional visitors to the park who treasure each infrequent visit, and store the memories for life. Others because of age, condition, or distance, may never ever set foot in the Park but are thrilled to know such a wild place still exists. And then there are the others: outfitters, tour-operators, trappers, and a select few adventurers who keep returning to the Willmore Wilderness on a continual basis year after year. You might call these the old hands.

Over the last few years I've been trying to transition from a visitor to an old hand. It's a tough job because it's big country and not easily won over. However I'm willing to put in the years it'll take to become an old hand because the Willmore is worth it. The experiences I'm having today are worth much more than money; in fact someday you may not be able to replicate these moments for any amount of cash.

Last year my wife Deana and I were the successful bidders on the pack trip down into the Jackpine country with Bazil & Sue, it isn't everyday you get to travel with a living legend. The trip was worth every dollar we spent and the experience was world class. If you are looking for a unique one-of-a-kind adventure I'd encourage you to consider bidding on this year's trip.

This past fall I was able to pack into some different country with another Willmore old hand, Larry Chapman. We worked our way up forgotten trails deep into the Swift Creek country on a trip I won't soon forget. It's experiences like these that motivate me to help the Foundation.

I don't know what it is that personally motivates you to be a member of the Foundation, but I'm glad that you are. Without the power of your voice, in unison with other members, we will not be heard. Please do not take your membership lightly as it comes with responsibility. By becoming a member of the Foundation you are saying you care and support the Foundation's goals. We may not all agree on every point but the main goal of preserving the Willmore must be every member's position.

As always we face some challenges in 2006. The pine beetle infestation will have a major impact on the Park and we need to keep informed. We see a need for fire in the Park, either natural or prescribed burns, to open up some of the country. The trail network needs work, as always. Our historical sites are fading into time, some of which are now lost forever. Our book project is largely completed but now needs financial support to get it to the publishing stage. At times it can all seem overwhelming.

However many hands make light work and the Willmore Wilderness Foundation has many hands. If you can, please get involved and help share the load. We will be holding three fundraisers over the winter and can always use volunteers. If you can't make it out to help we understand but ask that you make an effort to attend. Bring a few extra bucks for the unique items available at each function and come out and have some fun! And remember, it's our combined effort that will keep the Wilderness in the Willmore.



## Mountain Pine Beetle ... a pest or nature taking it's course?

Willmore Wilderness Park is under attack by a small insect called the mountain pine beetle. The mountain pine beetle (*Dendroctonus ponderosae* Hopkins) is a member of the bark beetle family, and is the most damaging insect pest of pine trees in western North America. The adult beetles are black, 5-7 mm long. The larvae are small grubs found in the inner bark. The mountain pine beetle normally has a one-year life cycle; however it may take two years to complete the life cycle in high elevation areas.

Michel Proulx, Public Affairs Officer of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development provided the Willmore Wilderness Foundation the latest information on the mountain pine beetle (MPB) progress. To date 5301 trees have been cut and burned. This activity took place in the four-week period prior to August 8, 2005. The workers cut and burned as many trees as possible in the window of opportunity from July 12 to August 6, 2005.

There are currently 1000 trees that have been baited with pheromone. Pheromone is an attractant that keeps pine beetles in a specific area. Once the pine beetles are attracted to the pheromone scent, the tree is then cut and burnt.

Mature pine forests along the eastern slopes, especially by the Alberta/BC and Alberta/U.S. borders, are most vulnerable to MPB attack. There are more than two million hectares of pine forests along the eastern slopes. Mr. Proulx stated that this fall, aerial surveys of the eastern slopes were conducted. The surveys searched for red trees or fader trees, included Willmore Wilderness Park and the Kakwa Wildland Park areas. Mr. Proulx indicated that they are following up the aerial surveys with ground crews that seek out the red or fader patches. The ground crews then check all trees in these areas to see if they are dead because of MPB attack. Once the trees are identified, the ground crews will go back to cut and burn. This

should take place in the new year. This is a very labour intensive project as the men have to go to each individual tree.

The Department will be able to give a precise number of trees once the ground surveys are completed. Mr. Proulx will contact the Willmore Wilderness Foundation around February 1, 2006 when he will have a better idea of the numbers. The ground surveys will reveal future attack plans on this small mountain pine beetle that is endangering the beautiful forests of Willmore Wilderness Park. Ground surveys will determine what cutting and burning will take place in January, February and March. This must be done before the flight period of the MPB. The Willmore Wilderness Foundation will provide an update on this number in the Spring Newsletter.

If the beetles are not managed while the populations are low, severe damage to pine stands can result. Outbreaks can destroy thousands of hectares of mature

pine forest in a single year. Currently, B.C. is experiencing a major mountain pine beetle outbreak. Alberta is actively working with B.C. in areas where the MPB is threatening to come over the border.

Years of fire suppression have resulted in thick timber growth in Willmore. Historically the indigenous Rocky Mountain People managed the forest by allowing the natural fires to burn the mountain valleys. This practice resulted in natural grasslands and good vegetation for the game populations. In the 1940's, natural fire suppression became a government policy -- resulting in the Park becoming a tinderbox. Finally, there is agreement among various authorities that the need exists for natural or controlled burns in Willmore Wilderness Park. The mountain pine beetle is just a small creature that may in its own way, be pushing us to act upon the need, to restore the natural order of this magnificent Rocky Mountain Park.

### The Riding School

*Anecdotes*



**'They say among the riding schools  
they have a regular book of rules.  
The man who wrote the book explains  
just how to sit and hold your reins --  
And other lessons facts reveals  
about your elbows and your heels.  
You read and practice -- then decide  
if you have REALLY learned to ride.'**

**'The cowboy doesn't give a care  
how you sit -- just so you're there!  
Nor how you hold your hands and feet  
the main thing is to hold your seat!  
You can learn more  
from a buckin' boss  
Than any school you come across,  
For you and him can soon decide  
what's underneath each other's hide!'**



## President's Report continued from page 1



Our summer was thwarted with many issues that ranged from an impending pine beetle infestation -- to constant rain -- to tremendous blow-down

During the first two weeks of July, all of my children and grandchildren came on the outfit to help clear trail. Susan and I have nine children combined -- and six grandchildren. My boys helped clear the trail from the Sulphur River Staging area, up the Smoky River and over to Boulder Creek. There were swaths of trees down -- eight feet high. There were as many as ten big pine trees lying across the trail obstructing our travel. It was quite a feat to cut our way through -- but not impossible, with my sons' agility and handling of the chainsaws. It wasn't long before we were off and travelling the old packtrail. I would also thank the women in the family for all their help in keeping the 'fires going.' We had great meals and camaraderie.

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation had donated a 14-day trip to the Grande Prairie and Edmonton Auctions. The trip took place from July 31 to August 13, 2005. We also donated the same to the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep (FNAWS) International. It turned out that the FNAWS buyers could not come on the dates that we had pledged -- resulting in two trips. John, Wendy & daughter Shanna Buhler of Edmonton, Catherine Gordon-Campbell and daughter Julia of Ontario and Cathy Marshall of Ontario ventured out on the 14-day trip. Hank Cheverie of Grande Cache volunteered his time to come, along with Banjo Hallock, Logan Leonard and my better-half, Susan. I want to thank Hank and John for doing chainsaw work on the trails which were obstructed with deadfall from last winter's storms. The only good weather we had all summer was on this trip.

In September we took out Donald Mann of Colorado, USA who purchased the FNAWS International trip. He brought his friend Dave (the Barbarian) TenEyck of Colorado. Dave was dubbed 'Dave the Barbarian' by our volunteer wranglers, Logan Leonard and Banjo Hallock. Nanette (Hamilton) Moseley of Grande Cache also volunteered her

time to help cook on this ten-day trip. We all had a lot of fun. Logan and Banjo entertained us with Métis jigging and Dave the Barbarian taught everyone how to play the spoons. We got soaked on the FNAWS trip.

Our last trip took place at the end of September and the beginning of October -- and it too was very, very wet. Mel Longden of Edmonton, a Board Member of the Foundation, volunteered his time to knock down the camps and do a little hunting on the side. Mel was a great help and we got everything put to bed for the winter months.

Most of the summer was very wet and we did not get nearly as much done as we had hoped. The weather hindered our trail clearing activities. We spent a lot of our time clearing existing trails of winter blow-down. We also scouted out and restored some very old packtrails. We did get a good handle on the Pauline Creek trail but need some time and good weather to restore the original trail to the BC Border. To make things harder, we had no funding from the Alberta government, neither last year nor this year. All of our initiatives were completed due to the generous donations and continued support of volunteers.

I hope to see everyone at this year's fundraisers. We are having three conventions in 2006: in Edson, Grande Prairie and Edmonton. We welcome your support.

Happy Trails  
Bazil Leonard



## Willmore Wanderings

By Mark Engstrom

My travels in the Willmore Wilderness in 2005 were somewhat curtailed due to a very busy year at work. However, I managed to make 2 trips to Big Grave Flats from Grande Cache Lake, and 4 or 5 day-trips to Kvass Flats from Sulphur Gates.

The summer seemed cool and wet in general; muddy/cool riding conditions were present for much of it. However there were days that were beautiful to be out in the Park on a horse.

My first trip into the Park this year was in May, from the 10<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup>. My friend Randy Tellier and I rode out to the Big Graves Forestry cabin from the Cowlick staging area on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Randy is a Grande Cache outfitter. We made the trip out in one day. The trails had not been ridden since the fall before. There was a lot of blow-down, more than usual it seemed. Being a short trip we didn't clear any trail, instead riding around all the blow-down. Being early in the year, the ground was still frozen so it was easy riding off the trail and through the muskeg sections. There was up to three feet of snow on the NE top side of Hayden's Ridge which made for some tough riding for about an hour.

The Big Graves Forestry cabin was warm and cozy as usual, it is always a welcome sight. We spent the better part of the second day around the cabin, re-stocked the wood supply, and rested our "first-trip-out" sore bones. Later in the day we made a tour of the flats on both sides of the river and did not see much for big game. We did note a new outfitter's camp on Kvass Creek just before it flows into the Sulphur, in Bazil's (Leonard) old camp spot. This spot had not been used for many years, but someone had done a lot of work, there were several sleeping tent spots along with a large cook/kitchen tent spot. One feature that impressed me was an 8' long bench carved out of a

very large spruce log, and a fine collection of shed antlers was present.

Traveling back through the south end of Big Grave Flats we noticed Louis Delorme's grave had been ripped apart by what appeared to be a bear. We figured maybe it had been after the ants/termites in the logs. We didn't have time to piece it back together so we took some pictures to let relatives know.

We packed up and rode out back to Grande Cache on the third day. Also of note on the trip were the enormous amount of wolf tracks at the Cowlick Creek meadows at the base of Hayden's Ridge, along with a couple of wolf-killed deer carcasses.

After that I made several day trips to Kvass Flats. I was out with Bazil once, took a friend from work out once, and made a couple of trips out with my 4-year-old daughter Lacey. She had ridden before, but these were her first "long" trips at 1½ hours one way. She loves horses and loved every minute of the trips out there, riding our little mare Bailey. My friend Randy and his 'better-half' Rebecca came along on one of these trips. They had never been out that way before and were amazed at the awesome scenery in the Smoky River Valley.

My second trip to Big Graves was in late August. My brother "Toe" and I rode out with five head of horses for a week-long trip. The trail out had been cleared and was in great shape except for the cutline down the back of H Ridge down to the Sulphur the bottom of the Walton trail. We cleared a few major blow-down logs from this section -- where we couldn't ride around. We set up camp at

the south end of Big Grave Flats, noticing on the way by that Louis Delorme's grave had been put back together and looked O.K. We spent most of a week traveling the drainages from the flats. Trail clearing needs to take place there, as places such as the trails to Rocky Pass and Whistler Creek were thick and could use a lot of cutting to make them passable.

While we were out there, we met the local outfitter who had set up in Bazil's old camp. He had cleared the trails out to the Flats, and told us he had cleared the old Walton Creek trail rather than the cutline down Hayden's to the Sulphur. We rode this trail on the way back to Grande Cache and, besides some very wet muskeg spots, the Walton Creek trail was in great shape.

On a side note, my friend Leonard's (Sweep) horse April, who I've used on almost every long trip I've taken into the Willmore, had a severe leg break and had to be put down in October. She will be missed greatly as she was a fine mount and a good friend.

*Editor's Note: Mark Engstrom is on the Board of Directors of the Willmore Wilderness Foundation.*





## Hargreaves Brothers

by Susan Feddema-Leonard



Among the many hunters whom Roy (Hargreaves) guided was Mr. L.S. Chadwick of Cleveland, who enjoyed a successful hunt for a big horn sheep (1935).

Next year Chadwick asked Roy to join him on a hunt for stone sheep. This trip was arranged with guide and outfitter Walter "Curly" Cochrane ... of Rolla, B.C. Again Mr. Chadwick was successful and took home the world's record stone sheep.

written in 1976 by Gladys, Mrs. Jack Hargreaves and Sophia, Mrs. Roy Hargreaves

I had the wonderful opportunity to interview Ishbel (Hargreaves) Cochrane for the book, the People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park. Ishbel is a gracious and wonderful hostess, who lives in Valemount, BC. She is the daughter of Roy Hargreaves and was an experienced trail hand. She kept true to form by serving me homemade soup, chocolate chip cookies and coffee during my interview. I truly found a kindred spirit in Ishbel, both of us having traveled the same remote country in northwestern Willmore. Ishbel and her family regularly travelled from Mt. Robson, up the Smoky and over to the 'Range' which is the area from the Muddy Water River to Eaton Creek -- where her family wintered over a hundred head of horses. Her family also took 30-day hunting trips to areas like Winnifred Lakes, Femm Creek, Llama Flats, Sheep Creek and Copton Creek. Ishbel was the cook on many of these expeditions as well as on summer trips that lasted sometimes up to 21 days. The following are excerpts written in 1976 by Gladys, Mrs. Jack Hargreaves and Sophia, Mrs. Roy Hargreaves about Jack, Roy and brother George.

"In 1917 Jack went with Curly Phillips and Miss Mary L. Jobe on a trip to the Porcupine (Kakwa) River. The purpose of this trip was to build a trapper's cabin for Curly, to take in his winter's supply of food, and to show Miss Jobe the country around the Porcupine River. When this was accomplished, the party started for home. They found very heavy snowfall had occurred, so horses and men moved very slowly. Curly and Jack took turns at breaking trail, the snow being belly deep for the horses. They had little food for either man or beast and they returned through Grande Cache, an Indian village. Jack and Curly were known by some of the Indians and were given fine treatment. Miss Jobe, being a white woman, was of great interest. The party arrived back in Jasper many days overdue.

"George died at Sheep Creek while with the Hall hunting party in 1936. Art Allen was one of the guides with George, and it was Art's sad duty to phone the wardens at Jasper the news of George's passing. He was buried at Sheep Creek Falls; a copper plaque marks his grave.

"Among the many hunters whom Roy guided was Mr. L.S. Chadwick of Cleveland, who enjoyed a successful hunt for big horn sheep (1935). Next year he asked Roy to join him on a hunt for stone sheep. This trip was arranged with guide and outfitter Walter "Curly" Cochrane of Rolla, B.C. Again Mr. Chadwick was successful and took home the world's record stone sheep." (Walter Cochrane was Ishbel's father-in-law's twin brother. Ishbel donated a copy of the diary of Chadwick's 1936 hunt to the Willmore Wilderness Foundation which her father and Curly Cochrane guided on.)

The meeting with Ishbel Cochrane has put many of the pieces of the Willmore puzzle together. She has generously allowed me to scan her many precious photos on behalf of the Foundation. Willmore Wilderness Foundation is very grateful in that she has donated photocopies of both her mother's and her own journals of their travels up the Smoky Valley and its tributaries. One of Ishbel's 1943 journals outlined a 30-day trip on which she cooked for writer Jack O'Conner and his friend, Mr. Holliday. The trip outlines the camps that O'Conner went to, the game the men got; the weather and the great cooking of Ishbel and her sister Margie (Hargreaves) Duncan.

During the writing of the People and Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park, I have taken the liberty to make some changes to the original layout of the chapters. We will be putting the Hargreaves Brothers in Chapter One. I am moving

continued on page 7



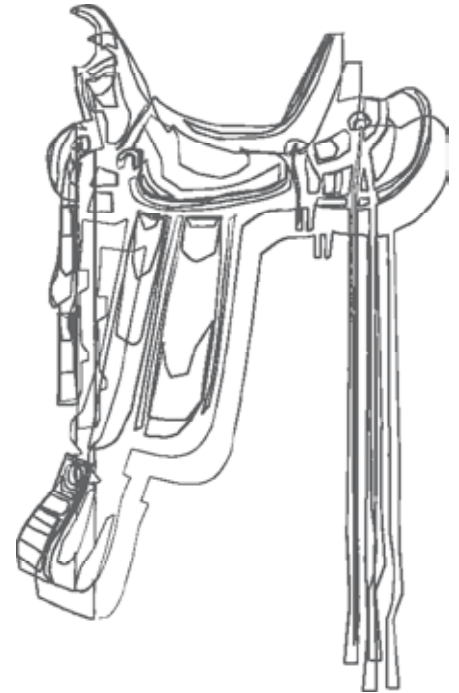
## Hargreaves Brothers

continued from page 6

some of the work that I have completed previously into a second book of outfitters from the 1960's onward. (This will be published once we get book one printed.) I have been given very good information, actual voice transcripts and photos of the outfitters from the first half of the 1900's. I am also compiling a book of Ishbel's 1942-1946 journals and my own diaries, which outline the reopening of the long-forgotten trails.

This work has been a labour of love for me. I am grateful that the families have provided the information freely. Our dilemma is that very few organizations have stepped up to the plate to help with the publishing costs. The Foundation will give any contributor recognition in the publication as well as provide published books so that organizations can re-coup 100%

of their original endowment. We have the book on a pre-sale and many of our members have pre-purchased the publication. However we are a long way off from what is needed to go to press. Men like the Hargreaves Brothers, Curly Phillips, the Nickersons, the Groats and others have made our outfitting industry what it is today. These men helped forge the outfitting industry into an international business -- yet these same men have almost been completely forgotten. It is a sad fact that there is virtually no written information about the early years of outfitting. In this Alberta Centennial, we still are a long way from getting the funds needed to go to press.



## People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park

Find about the old time outfitters of Willmore Wilderness:

Hargreaves Brothers  
Jack & Fred Brewster  
Carl Luger, Tom Vinson  
Art Allen, Leonard Jeck  
Jerry Stojan, Glen Kilgour,  
Tom Groat & sons Joe & Judd  
Tom McCready  
Dave Simpson,  
Emma & Nick Nickerson  
& more...



Donations towards the People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park have been coming in — slowly. We need to raise \$60,000 for the publishing of the book.

Individuals or organizations who donate \$100.00 or more will get an honourable mention in the book plus one book for every \$50.00 contributed.

The retail value of the book will be \$60.00. Help build the Book Publishing Fund. The Foundation has a special account set aside for this book.

The old time outfitters share the secrets of the mountains. They talk about the trails, hunting areas and downright funny stories.

WillmoreWildernessFoundation is pre-selling ...

'People & Peaks of Willmore Wilderness Park'

... at \$50.00 per copy



Willmore Wilderness Foundation  
a registered charitable organization  
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## Willmore Wilderness Foundation

### Steps Up to the Plate



The Willmore Wilderness Foundation has been a responsible corporate citizen and has tried to support other organizations during this past year. The Foundation has donated the following to various groups over the past year.

- Foundation for North American Wild Sheep Alberta Chapter:  
One tanned wolverine
- Safari Club International Northern Alberta Chapter  
One tanned wolverine
- Foundation for North American Wild Sheep International in Cody Wyoming  
14-day Exploratory Expedition

the Grande Cache Tourism Center with the proceeds going to the Foundation. These photographs are limited edition, each having been signed and numbered for authenticity. Framed photos have been presented to the following organizations as donations:

- Grande Cache Christmas Fair 2004  
Two Willmore Images
- Grande Cache Ice Breaker Memorial Hockey Tournament  
One Willmore Image
- Aseniwuche Winewak Nation for the Red Road Gala  
One Willmore Image

Willmore Images are exceptional photographs of Willmore Wilderness Park . Willmore Images are on sale in

## Join Our Membership

Find out about what's happening in Willmore Wilderness. Get the latest news, issues & new developments! We will keep in touch with our members in a newsletter twice during the year.

Find out about what's happening in Willmore. Get the latest news, issues and developments! We will keep in touch with our members in a newsletter twice during the year. We keep you up-to-date on important events and information. Articles or letters to the Editor are always welcome. Join today!

A person may become a member by a favourable vote passed by a majority of members at a regular meeting of the Foundation, and upon payment of the fee. Written notification will be sent to accepted members with a membership card. Membership renewals will be sent out 14-days prior to this meeting, along with a formal notice. The membership year runs from June to June.

Yearly Membership is as follows:

- \$15.00 for the 2005-2006 year
- \$20.00 for the 2006-2007 year
- \$25.00 for the 2007-2008 year
- Life Time Membership is \$500.00
- Corporate Membership is \$100.00

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## Memoirs of Willmore

by Catherine Gordon-Campbell

I travelled in Willmore Wilderness Park during the summers of 2004 and 2005. Willmore was far more than I expected. I had wanted a real Western experience, something that would touch the soul as opposed to a dude ranch trail ride experience. Willmore is the true West. My first trip included facing many challenges like my fear of heights and my ability to believe in myself. Willmore can strip away the layers and leave you with yourself staring right back at you.

I enjoyed the beauty of the Park, on my second trip, in a totally new way. I saw more than I did the first time, and Willmore became even more beautiful. Even the edges of the trail were not nearly so

high as they seemed the year before! This year I went in August and the warm summer air was tremendous. The water levels were down and the muskeg was an easy ride compared to the previous September.

The spirits of the Indians, cowboys and trappers of days gone by came alive as one rode along the trail. I wondered what the ones of old thought as they rode the same packtrails. For example, our final ride into Grande Cache started with a bright, sunny warm day. A thunder storm came rolling along the field and finally we were left with a steady downpour of cold rain. My daughter was the only one who had her rain gear on her saddle so she stayed dry. I wondered how many others

before me experienced that same kind of day and felt the same as I did.

Part of what makes Willmore so remarkable is its history. The cowboys, Indians and trappers of days gone by traveled the trails, survived and made a living for themselves in partnership with the Park. The stories that I heard along the way about the people of the past were incredible. The fact that the old trails are being restored to preserve this natural heritage really makes visiting the Park a special privilege. Albertans have much to be proud of, as so much of their heritage is built upon the natural resources within the province. Willmore is a part of that heritage.

## Edson - Grande Prairie - Edmonton: Convention Overview

<p><b>1st Willmore Wilderness Shindig</b> Edson, Alberta Royal Canadian Legion. January 28, 2006</p> <p>The 1st Willmore Wilderness Shindig will be held at the Edson Royal Canadian Legion: Joe Wynne Branch 51 on January 28, 2006. This event will feature a banquet, live &amp; silent auctions, displays, a Willmore Wilderness PowerPoint presentation and more. The Foundation has made a commitment to highlight mountain art, vacation packages and products at all future conventions.</p> <p>Cocktails will be at 5 pm and dinner at 6 pm. Tickets are \$50.00 per person. For more information or to obtain tickets please call toll free at 1-866-WILMORE.</p> <p><b>Visa and MasterCard Accepted</b></p>	<p><b>2nd Willmore Wilderness Wingding</b> Grande Prairie Grande Prairie at the Quality Inn March 4, 2006</p> <p>The 2nd Willmore Wilderness Winter Wingding will be held in Grande Prairie on March 4, 2006 at the Quality Inn. The Chairpersons are Brian &amp; Deana Bildson and their phone number is 780-831-1087.</p> <p>This event will feature a banquet, live &amp; silent auction, displays, a Willmore Wilderness PowerPoint presentation and more. The Foundation has made a commitment to highlight mountain art, vacation packages and products at all future conventions.</p> <p>Cocktails will be at 5 pm and dinner at 6 pm. Tickets are \$50.00 per person. For more information or to obtain tickets please call toll free at 1-866-WILMORE.</p>	<p><b>3rd Willmore Wilderness Annual Fundraiser</b> Edmonton Coast Terrace Inn April 22, 2006</p> <p>The 3rd Willmore Wilderness Annual Fundraiser will be held at the Coast Terrace Inn in Edmonton on April 22, 2006. The event will be held in the Ball Room. Dinner tickets are \$60.00 per person. Cocktails will be at 5 pm and Dinner at 6 pm. This event will feature a banquet, live &amp; silent auction, displays, a Willmore Wilderness PowerPoint presentation and more. The Foundation has made a commitment to highlight mountain art, vacation packages and products at all future conventions.</p> <p>The Convention Co-Chairmen are Mel Longden at 780-487-5215 and Warren Bryanton at 780-621-9329. For more information or to obtain tickets please call toll free 1-866-WILMORE.</p>
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advertise with the willmore wilderness newsletter





## Hornets, Horses & Muskeg

by Hank Cheverie



I also had another 'first'...  
at learning to ride  
through hornets.  
Bazil was in the lead and  
rode through the swarm  
with no difficulty.  
By the time my horse,  
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The Willmore Wilderness Foundation had auctioned two 14-day trips at the Grande Prairie and Edmonton Conventions. Catherine Gordon-Campbell and Cathy Marshall had bought the Grande Prairie donation. John and Wendy Buehler had purchased the Edmonton donation. I had just retired from my job with Corrections Canada in June 2005 and decided that I would like to volunteer my time, expertise and new chainsaw for the expedition. I hadn't ridden a horse in many years, so was a bit apprehensive about travelling great distances before getting warmed up to the challenge. However, with outfitter Bazil Leonard, that was no problem. My body held up to the two-week trek -- and I had my trusty army cot, which gave me a good sleep throughout the journey.

We packed up the outfit on July 31st on a warm, sunny morning. There were 10 of us in all, including Cathy, Catherine and her 12-year-old daughter Julia; John, Wendy and their 12-year-old daughter Shanna; Bazil, Susan and their 13-year-old son Logan and 'mois'. We also had two dogs and started with 18-horses -- however, four of the steeds went AWOL during the trip and beat us back to Kvasv Flats. Their abdication of responsibility resulted in the other horses having to carry bigger and heavier loads.

There were many 'firsts' for me on this trip. I had my first opportunity at learning to pack a horse. It's a lot harder than it looks at first glance -- however Baz taught me how to pull slack and we did just fine. I also had another 'first' at learning to ride through hornets. Bazil was in the lead and rode through the swarm with no difficulty. By the time my horse, Sam hit the nest, he was dancing and trying to get away from the nasty little insects. Bazil woke the hornets up and the rest of us had to pay the price. I learned another 'first'

without any preparation or instruction, which was the art of riding through muskeg. We had a particularly wet summer in Willmore and the muskegs were certainly wet and very boggy. Luckily Sam was good in the soft ground and I made out all right.

We did get some trails cleared and it was a good thing that I brought my new chainsaw, because Bazil's old saw broke down. There was a lot of deadfall on the trail between camp and Ptarmigan Lake. It was hard to believe that the trail was completely clean in 2004 -- because we had to literally saw our way to the lake. The severe storms last winter certainly blew down many old trees. We also did cutting on the Pauline Creek trail that heads over to the B.C. border. This was an old established trail that had been neglected and forgotten for many years. There was plenty of deadfall on the trail that needed to be cleared away with my trusty saw. The crew also scouted an old trail that was close to Carl Luger's 1950's camp, which bypassed some of the muskeg on the east side of Mt. deVeber. This trail was flagged and still needs to be cleared at some point in the future.

I really had time to enjoy the beauty and majesty of this Alberta Park. I sure enjoyed my time fishing with Logan, my tent mate. Logan is somewhat of an expert on fishing the rivers of Willmore Wilderness Park. Ptarmigan Lake was also a great experience for me. It was a fantastic place to visit -- and the bonus was that we got to see this glacial-fed, turquoise lake on a beautiful sunny summer's day.



## On the Trail Again

by Nanette Hamilton Moseley

The Willmore Wilderness Foundation made a 100% donation of a 14-day trip, which was auctioned off at the North American Wild Sheep (FNAWS) San Antonio Texas Convention. The FNAWS mission is to promote and enhance increasing populations of indigenous wild sheep, to safeguard against their decline or extinction, and to fund programs for professional management of these populations, all while keeping administrative costs to a minimum. Willmore Wilderness Park is home to a large population of Big Horn Sheep and the Willmore Foundation thought it imperative to support the conservation work that FNAWS International was doing. I had attended the San Antonio Convention as an ambassador for the Willmore Wilderness Foundation and enjoyed the convention.

Donald Mann of Colorado was the highest bidder on this donated Exploratory Expedition into the Willmore. His wife was unable to attend so he brought a friend by the name of Dave TenEyck. Don was unable to make the trip in August, 2005 and Bazil Leonard agreed to earmark time for Don and Dave in September. The 14-day trip was changed at the buyer's request to 10-days. This was a perfect time for me -- and I volunteered to come along to help out.

On September 8th we packed out into Willmore Wilderness Park from the Sulphur Gates Staging Area on the Smoky River, near Grande Cache Alberta. The September day dawned bright and beautiful -- sunny Alberta had lived up to its name. There were seven of us at the trailhead who included outfitter Bazil Leonard, Susan Feddema-Leonard, their son Logan, and Logan's friend Banjo -- and of course Dave TenEyck and Donald Mann. It was a day I had looked forward to for quite awhile. I had begun my "career" as a camp cook several years earlier, 1979 to be exact, with an old outfitter on the

Smoky, Charlie Stricker. That is another story in itself -- but suffice it say I was looking forward to seeing the country again. I had become familiar with the mountains a little further south of there while cooking with outfitter George Kelley. We were on the trail together from 1989-2001 up the Berland River and south of there to the Jasper Park border. I loved the mountains and horses and camping -- that is why I volunteered. It seemed like coming on the FNAWS trip was "a full circle" for me.

Four years had passed since I last ventured out into the mountains. I was excited, happy, and interested to see how I would feel on this trip. Bazil packed up at the Gates, with the help of 13-year-old Logan, and 13-year-old Banjo. The ride the first day was beautiful and short. We rode a couple of hours to Kvass Flats, where we camped. We were in this camp for a few days, socked in by bad weather -- a pattern that was to hold for most of the trip. We quickly got to know each other around the dinner table and told tales, jokes, examined maps, and swapped hunting tales. The food and company were good, and we spent the next few days "chopping wood and carrying water"-- between raindrops. The weather broke and we were off again, headed to the Jackpine River, with a chocolate-chip cookie/coffee stop at Pete and Lois McMahon's hunting camp on Corral Creek, and an overnight at Boulder Creek.

The trail was rough and boggy in places, but of course I enjoyed every minute of the journey. We were headed to clear old packtrails and explore the area. Spirits were high, and there was NO STRESS. I had gotten so used to the pressure of the sheep hunting routine that it was amazing just to sit back and enjoy myself, finding out where I could fit in and give a hand when needed. The Jackpine River came into view, and we followed it along for a while



passing an old trapper's cabin from the 50's -- Art Allen's cabin.

We camped in the clearing, and that was our base for the next few days. In spite of the steady rainy weather, we ventured out and cleared trail, walked to Art's cabin, and generally had a good time. In the evenings we talked, discussing the history of the area, talking of long past hunts, outfitters, and hunters. Dave who is educated as a geologist taught us about the rocks and various formations that we could see -- as well as how to play the spoons. Logan and Banjo practiced their jiggling for us.

We rode out after a week, and stayed at Kvass again. The next day dawned with Alberta blue skies. The fall leaves were at their peak, and it had snowed high in the mountains -- truly a beautiful sight. A spectacular ride out was enjoyed by all. That night in town, over steaks, we all agreed that we had a successful adventure, got some work done, and really enjoyed ourselves. I know that this won't be my last trip.



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## Colorado Burro Racer Visits Willmore

by Dave TenEyck

Having reached the ripe old age of 49 and having travelled quite a bit, I thought I had seen a lot of beautiful sights. Being an avid outdoorsman living in Colorado, raising natural beef and championship racing burros, I really thought I had it great. But that was before my Alberta Willmore Wilderness adventure this past fall. But I'm getting ahead of myself, so allow me to digress.

A good friend of mine, Don Mann, an avid hunter and outdoorsman, attended the annual FNAWS convention last October. After a glass or two of wine he decided to bid on a donated guided trip to the Willmore Wilderness. Trail building in Willmore was the focus. The bidding was brisk but in the end he was the proud owner of this trip. The idea was for him and his wife to go, but she changed jobs this summer and was unable to get time off. Enter Dave the good friend of Don. I was offered the chance to go, and immediately made plans!

We arrived in Grande Cache, the departure point for the trip, in early September and met our guides, Bazil Leonard and Susan Feddema-Leonard. Preparations were swiftly completed and we all met at the trailhead for our 10-day adventure. I was surprised at the size of the pack string, seven riders, nine pack horses. A total of 16 animals to saddle, pack, and manage, but Sue and Bazil are well practiced and with some help from the rest of us we got underway in no time.

We spent time in three camps: base camp, Many Faces, and main camp. The idea was to get to Main camp as fast as possible and clear and mark as much trail

as possible in the available time. It was 35 miles to main camp and we took three days to cover the distance. Unfortunately, we had seven days of rain which slowed us down getting to main camp and prevented us from doing much clearing, but we managed to spend a day sleuthing out the direction and location of the old lost main trail leading to the Continental Divide. During the great fur trapping era the old trappers covered this area, blazing many trails that have since been lost to forest re-growth. It was fascinating to find old blaze marks and trail paths while thinking of the men who came earlier using these lost trails. One could almost feel their presence along the trails. It made me wonder if someday future generations would think of us modern trail blazers the same way. Either way, I enjoyed helping to find the ancient travel ways.

Along the entire distance that we covered, the scenery was beyond description: beautiful grassy valleys, lush tree covered mountainsides, and soaring peaks of every color and description. During our trip, snow fell on the high peaks almost every night, and the aspen trees were in the middle of changing color, adding to the rich color palette. Put all of this color against an impossibly blue sky and you now can get an idea of the beauty of the Willmore Wilderness. It is, however, impossible to really soak in the beauty of the area without seeing it for yourself. So, as I said in the beginning, coming from the magnificent state of Colorado with our soaring Rockies, I thought I had seen it all. Willmore has changed all that. I now realize how much more there is to see and how much I have been missing. Willmore Wilderness...I'm coming back!

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