

**Bob Scammell – Memorial
AFGA Conference – Edmonton, February 23rd, 2017**

Good Morning:

Today I want to spend some time remembering a good friend of mine and of many in the AFGA; “Bob Scammell”.

Bob was born in Edmonton on Nov. 29th, 1937. He died on Nov. 24th, 2016, just days short of his 79th Birthday, in the Red Deer Regional Hospital with his family at his side. He was the only child of Elsie and Harry Scammell. The family moved to Brooks in 1938. Bob’s Dad Harry was an avid gardener, fisherman and hunter and Mother Elsie, a master chef and writer. Learning from them, Bob made those activities a part of his life.

Bob graduated from the University of Alberta in 1959 with an honours degree in French and English. Having being given an entrance scholarship he then attended Dalhousie University Law School.

Bob practiced law for 37 years in Red Deer where he and his wife of 54 years, Barbara, who was from Pincher Creek, raised their children, son John (Darlene), and daughter Maura Hooper (Chris).

Several years ago Bob was diagnosed with “Inclusion Body Myositis” (IBM). It is an inflammatory muscle disease characterized by slow progressive weakness and wasting of muscles in the arms and legs. There is no known cause, cure or treatment. This disease greatly affected his mobility and his love of fly fishing, gardening and hunting.

A memorial service was held for Bob on November 30, 2016 at the Red Deer Golf & Country Club with flags flying at half-mast in his honour. Five Past Presidents of the AFGA attended the service: Randy Collins, I - Don Haydon, Jack Graham, Ray Makowecki and Vern McIntosh, as well as the Life Members Representative Carole Romaniuk. Also in attendance were old friends; Trout Unlimited Don Pike, Outdoor Writers of Canada members; Jim McLennan, Duane and Adrienne Radford and Neil Waugh were there to pay their respects.

While his daughter Maura was giving her eulogy, a small herd of white-tailed deer crossed the golf course in the background. Duane Radford felt it may

have been a sign that Bob's spirit was with those in attendance. Maura spoke of quality time with her father while growing up and of fun days beside Pincher Creek. She said his record was 191 days in the outdoors one year, but 150 days would not be unusual.

In his son John's eulogy, he spoke fondly of his Father's wit and dry sense of humour, and joked about what Bob called the "torture test", the annual father-son fishing trips which started when John was 12 years old. John said "there was a period of a few years, during my early teens, when I really resented being dragged away from my friends and girlfriend for a week of fishing with my dad. I was surly, rude, and probably no fun at all to be with. Dad endured those trips, and the tradition continued well into my career as a teacher. About six years ago it became apparent to both of us that our "torture tests" were over because his legs couldn't do it anymore". In an interview with Red Deer Advocate reporter Murray Crawford, John said, "When I look back on what I'm going to miss, it's not so much the fishing; it's the sitting by the bank of a nice stream having lunch with him. We chatted about everything from politics to our lives to whatever was going on."

His legacy will be that of one of Alberta's most prominent conservationists whose honest open, but direct, style won him numerous accolades. He will be greatly missed as an outdoor columnist who could always be counted on to take a stand in support of conservation and the sound management of fish and wildlife resources. He was also one of Alberta's most ardent supporters of the maintenance of public lands and keeping those lands open to the public for hunting, fishing and general recreation.

When Bob returned from Dalhousie Law School in Halifax in 1962 and joined a law firm in Red Deer it wasn't long before he became a member of the Red Deer Fish and Game Association. His first AFGA conference was in Banff in 1966 and he never missed a conference since then until his (IBM) disease slowed him down just a few years ago. In 1970 Bob became President of the Red Deer club, and at one point he served as the Zone 3 Chairman.

Bob Scammell is described in Conservation Pride and Passion, the 100 year History Book of the AFGA as a witty and affable lawyer from Red Deer. In 1973 he was elected as President of the AFGA and at the age of 36 he was the youngest President we have ever had. This was in the early years of Premier Peter Lougheed Government. Bob's two greatest achievements as President,

according to his own account, were: Getting the Buck for Wildlife program up and running, and secondly the wide influence and good public relations the AFGA achieved through the hiring of the late Elmer Kure as our first and only Presidential Executive Assistant.

The Minister of the Department of Lands and Forests, with responsibility for Fish and Wildlife, at the time was Dr. Allan Warrack, Dr. Warrack was definitely one of the best Ministers of Fish and Wildlife Alberta ever had. He brought in the legislation for the Buck for Wildlife concept, and became an enthusiastic supporter.

It's interesting to note that the concept for the Buck for Wildlife came from a resolution at a Conference when Bob was President. The resolution called for that all hunting and fishing licenses sold, \$2.00 (two dollars) would be set aside for conserving habitat. When the resolution was presented to the Minister he thought it was a great idea. Dr. Warrack came back with an alternate proposal, saying, if the AFGA agreed to let him present this resolution to the Legislature as his 'idea', and that the annual amount from each license is one dollar, rather than the two dollars (as proposed), he would go ahead with the concept. The legislation was passed successfully!

The very first Buck for Wildlife project was the North Raven River rehabilitation project. Bob frequently wrote about the North Raven project, and considered it to be one of the premier projects ever carried out by the program.

Bob was "the Dean" of outdoor writers of Alberta who informed and entertained readers for over 50 years through his weekly columns in newspapers like The Red Deer Advocate, The Brooks Bulletin, Calgary Herald and the Edmonton Journal, as well as monthly columns for the Alberta Outdoorsman magazine, regionally in The Outdoor Edge magazine and nationally in the Canadian Fly Fisher magazine.

At many of the Annual AFGA Conferences Bob Scammell sat at the Media Table on his own, all by himself. He took great interest in the Resolutions and every year he wrote two or three articles covering the major topics that were discussed at the AFGA Conference. When he couldn't attend the last few Conferences, he designated a "surrogate" to gather intelligence and provide photos for him. Bob covered last year's Conference in a series of three articles in his Alberta Outdoorsmen column, "Fishing Phile".

Bob received many honours over the years for his conservation activities. The Outdoors Writers of Canada recognized him on numerous occasions as one of Canada's leading outdoors communicators. He was the winner of the OWC 1967 Book Award for Good Old Guys, Alibis & Outright Lies. Bob also won the OWC Book Award for 'The Outside Story' in 1982.

He was awarded the AFGA's highest award in 1976, the Fulton Trophy. He was selected by the Canadian Wildlife Federation for the Winchester Canada Outdoorsman of the year award in 1983. This award included a Winchester Shotgun at that time.

In 1987 Bob went to England as a member of the first Canadian team to ever compete in the World Fly-Fishing Championship. He was named to the Alberta Order of the Bighorn by the Alberta government in 2000, Alberta's highest award for fish and wildlife conservation.

Bob, a former director of the Canadian Wildlife Federation, was honoured by receiving the Roderick Haig-Brown Award from the CWF in Winnipeg in 2005.

He was inducted into the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame, located in Red Deer, in 2013 in the Bell Memorial Award Category as a member of the Outdoor Sports Writer media, being one of the most influential writers about hunting, fishing, outdoor sports, recreation and conservation.

I've already mentioned two of the three books that Bob authored. Another is titled 'The Phonological Fly', his photography in this book is outstanding. The book is all about the predicting of trout fly hatches with the blooming of wildflowers, a truly fascinating little book.

One of Bob's greatest pleasures was spending time at his beloved Stump Ranch; the 40 acres adjoined Prairie Creek included a cabin. Bob spent many days each year pursuing the brown trout in this productive creek, I think he actually named some of those trout that he returned to the river. He knew every hole in this amazing water course.

I spent a few days of several Novembers enjoying deer hunting out of the Stump Ranch. The hunting on Bob's quarter adjoining Prairie Creek, with a good sized alfalfa field, was always productive. But there was a difference in

what we were hunting for. I liked hunting white-tailed deer; Bob was looking for “Horseshoes” an almost mythical mule deer Buck. Luck provided an opportunity for him to see Horseshoes one fall, but the crafty Buck was about 200 yards outside of the quarter where he held a land owners tag.

Bob was an outstanding chef and his prized recipes always more than met expectations during the deer hunting season. A good bottle of wine was a prerequisite. Recounting hunting stories always started after the dishes were done. He never wanted to hunt moose; he felt those critters were just too big to deal with once they were on the ground.

Bob always wanted to catch a Bull Trout as long as his leg. Well, he accomplished this goal in a small mountain river, on a guided trip, in south-east British Columbia. Bob encouraged me to fish the same river, and just a year or two later I did just that. I hooked a big Bull Trout but didn't land it. Fishing this particular river was always a bit of an adventure with it being well known for grizzly bears being present.

Bob will be remembered for many accomplishments. Certainly his outdoor writing would be at the top of the list and another being his lifelong commitment to the “maintaining of Public Land Ownership for the benefit of the owners, the public.”

Let's not forget his dogged persistence in the uncovering of “Cowboy Welfare”, where he discovered that a minority of crown grazing lease holders are reaping a benefit in excess of 100 million dollars annually from lease disturbances from oil and gas activity. Bob even got Alberta's Auditor General onside, the AG came to the same conclusion, but his report is still sitting in Alberta Environment and Parks.

Bob was an expert in all of his hobbies and I already mentioned his cooking. He was expert at cooking the various ethnic dishes that he really enjoyed, these included Chinese, Italian, Greek and Indian, and he frequently used recipes that were his Mother's favourites. Sometimes he even shared these “secret” recipes with close friends.

Gardening was a lifetime passion. He annually wrote columns about which seeds to plant for the best results, and where to order them. Then followed it with a fall column on just how those seed recommendations turned out. One of his little tricks in maintaining full use of his garden plot was to plant a

potato every time he dug up a hill of new potatoes. This way he could have new potatoes right into the fall. He loved cooking with garlic and typically grew what he used. I had a sample of six different types of from his garden one year.

Photography was another hobby that he excelled at. When in the outdoors he was never without a camera. His favourite camera, a point and shoot model, small, easy to use and always ready. Bob had a vast, well maintained, collection of all the slides and photos that he decided to keep.

Bob loved morel mushrooms and he had his secret hot spots for this *wild fungi* that he used in cooking several dishes. My favourite was when he cooked them to accompany a hearty breakfast. His wild fungi columns were always helpful in directing readers to likely areas where they could be found, and how to clearly identify them properly. His motto was if in doubt, don't pick.

Bob kept detailed notes every time he spent time in the outdoors. His large collection of his notebooks served him well in his writing. How detailed was he? Well I remember he told me once how many casts it took to catch an Atlantic salmon.

Wrap-Up:

Bob was one of several Past Presidents who were on the Heritage 100 Committee, the group that managed the development of our 100 year history: Conservation Pride and Passion, the 100 year History Book of the AFGA.

The Committee Commissioned Bob to write the Prologue and the Epilogue for the book. Everyone who has a copy of the history book should read the Prologue, called "The Good Old Daze" once a year. It describes the devastated fish and wildlife scene of the days leading up to the formation of the AFGA in 1908. It's an amazing story written by a master writer.

I would like the First Time Delegates at an AFGA Conference to identify yourselves by raising your hands.

I have four copies of Conservation Pride and Passion to give away to the first four that come up.

Thank you.