

park builder

Charlie Velay b. 1925 d. 2003

If you wanted something done in the Provincial Parks Branch in the 50's and 60's, you sent it to Charlie. As an efficient Chief Engineer and a politically astute Assistant Director, Charlie's people and project management skills were unmatched. He was prominent in the construction and development of the facilities that are still in use today, plus in the establishment of many of the largest parks in the province. As Director he was also responsible for the budget and for hand-picking individuals who would become the managing staff. His genuine interest in others shone through decades of brilliant management. By the time he retired, Charlie had visited every park in the province and had earned the respect and loyalty of hundreds.



Above: With his love for local history, his wide connections, and his flair for story-telling, Charlie was in demand as an emcee after retirement. (Photo courtesy of Velay family)

Background image: Mt Seymour Provincial Park, where Charlie was Engineer (Photo provided by Gail Ross, BC Parks)



Career:

UBC - B.A.Sc. Forest Engineering 1946
BC Parks - Chief Engineer 1949 - 1952,
Assistant Director 1952 - 1975,
Director 1975 to 1986

Awards:

Special Award, Federal-Provincial Parks
Council 1995

Parks:

Mount Seymour Provincial Park
Manning Provincial Park
Silverstar Provincial Park
Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness Provincial
Park
Mt. Edziza Provincial Park

Top: Charlie was adamant that unnecessary structures and materials in Parks be disposed of efficiently, often by fire.

Middle: Early in his career (1948).

Bottom: A decade later Charlie spent more time behind a desk (1958) (Photos courtesy of Velay family)