

park builder

John MacFarlane b. 1948

Park interpretation programs deepen our love for nature and our understanding of local environments. John reinvented Canadian park interpretation with a strategy, now called collaborative governance, that replaced top-down decision-making with local enthusiasm to keep programs relevant, and local involvement to keep them running. He helped display the ecological uniqueness of National Parks across Canada, and inspired new methods of interpretation planning around the globe. His brilliance in planning strategies, his unshakeable values, and his inspired approach to public service all integrate the belief that ecological health is one of the pre-requisites of a prosperous community.



Affiliations:

Boy Scouts of Canada - Water, Soil and Conservation Instructor 1966
Parks Canada - Park Interpreter and Chief Park Interpreter of Fundy National Park 1969-1973; Western Region - Regional Interpretation Planner 1974-1976; Head, National Parks Interpretation Planning 1976-1978; Head, National Parks Extension Planning 1978-1982
Canadian International Development Agency - International Consultant, Seconded to Jamaica Government Department of Natural Resources Conservation 1979
Parks Canada - Chief of Interpretation & Extension 1982-1986
Cordillera Communications Corporation - Principal 1986-1988
Maritime Museum of British Columbia - Executive Director & Curator 1988-1994
Heritage Tourism Consulting - Principal 1994-1999
Greater Vancouver Regional District Parks - Resource Management Planner 1999-2003
GVRD - West Nile Virus Mosquito Coordinator 2004-2006
Metro Vancouver - Senior Policy Coordinator, Corporate Relations 2006-2008
Metro Vancouver Regional Parks - Planning, Resource Management and Development Division Manager 2008

Awards:

National Distinguished Service Award of Interpretation Canada - 1984
Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, (London U.K.) October - 1994
Curator Emeritus (lifetime appointment) of the Maritime Museum of British Columbia, Victoria BC in April - 1995
BC Provincial Health Officer's Award for Excellence in Public Health for Exemplary Inter-sectoral Collaboration in Vector-borne Disease Prevention 2004

Above:
(Photo courtesy of John MacFarlane)

Background image: Eva Lake in Mount Revelstoke National Park
(Photo: Doreen McGillis, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks)

The interpretation programs at Revelstoke show off that which makes the park unique, including snow sheds, historic avalanches and the railway story. This distinctive, park-specific approach to interpretation was innovated and developed by John during the 70s and 80s.