

## ARLT, RAY



Ray Arlt was born in Trail, BC in 1935. He came to Vernon in 1970 as an employee with BC Hydro where he and his wife Vida raised 4 children. His early interests were in mountain climbing and rock climbing which he carried on throughout his working days and into retirement. His love of hiking led him to join the Vernon Naturalists' Club. His nature photography was soon noted by the Club and has been useful for activities as well as being on display in various locations around town, especially at the 'cloakroom gallery' in the Vernon and District Performing Arts Center. He is a past

president of the Vernon Camera club, spent 20 years with the Vernon RCMP Auxiliary and has served with the Search and Rescue Organization in the North Okanagan. He also volunteered with the Adult Day Care program doing slide presentations and singing at senior's residences around Vernon.

Ray has been an active and supportive member of the North Okanagan Naturalists' Club for many years. In various capacities Ray has helped the cause of nature in the North Okanagan region. He remains a member of the Swan Lake Committee and has volunteered on countless work parties both at Cool's Pond and Swan Lake, clearing trails and planting and watering trees at Swan Lake. When our Club was involved with the city roadside cleanup program, Ray organized volunteer work parties to pick up litter along Commonage Road from the DND Lands to Rose's Pond. He used Tim Horton's as a finale to draw as many club members as possible to turn out for this twice yearly event.

Bluebirds took a special place in his heart and he enjoyed monitoring his Bluebird Trail each season. Over the years he had several long hiking routes and helped with the building of new trails carrying boxes and tools. He also volunteered building new boxes at Venture Training Centre. He still 'substitutes' on bluebird trails for other monitors.

Ray felt strongly about passing on to children his interest of nature and the outdoors. Getting volunteers on Sundays was not an easy task but the Young Naturalist's Club could rely on Ray to be present for their monthly meetings, help on field trips and provide materials for building projects. Rattlesnakes also became a focus for Ray and he joined the Rattlesnake Research program that Linda Kennedy, Warden of the Campbell-Brown Ecological Reserve, has instigated. For several years he has been involved with weekly monitoring of the den sites. His interest and knowledge of Snakes and the Rattlesnake dens at both the Reserve and Kalamalka Park is extensive.

For a number of years during the Annual May Field Day events Ray planned and laid out the 'nature quiz' (identification of plants and shrubs) and reviewed the results afterwards. His sense of humour is well known to club members at social events and with the weekly hiking group members. Over the years he could be counted on to participate in the various Christmas skits where his performances were always memorable and entertaining.

Ray served two terms as President on the NONC executive from 2000-2004. His friendship with several long-time members was special, and he often drove members like Kay Bartholomew and Malcolm Martin to monthly meetings. A life membership was given to Ray in recognition of his work and dedication to so many of the Club's activities. Today he provides a valuable perspective with his practical background and unique field of knowledge. In the few hours he has left each week from his many interests and activities Ray tells us he is trying to become a senior citizen!

Rod Drennan/Margaret Mackenzie - February 2019