

Warden Jack Dickinson

1920-2001

Born in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan of English immigrant parents, Jack was educated at Central School and Prince Albert Collegiate Institute. In 1939 he joined the royal Canadian air force and served overseas as a real gunner in a Lancaster bomber. Wounded over Berlin, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. In 1946 he returned to Canada with his English war bride Grace (nee Green) with whom he had four children. Jack worked at PANP as a warden from 1960 to 1985.

An avid outdoorsman, Jack enjoyed fishing and hunting, and was a keen amateur ornithologist and botanist. For several years he was stationed at Sturgeon Crossing, where he performed the duties common to the district wardens of the time: patrolling, conducting animal counts, fighting forest fires, checking fishing licenses, rescuing stranded boaters, intercepting poachers, and offering advice and aid to tourists and visitors. Promoted to Area Manager, he spent his final years in Waskesiu.

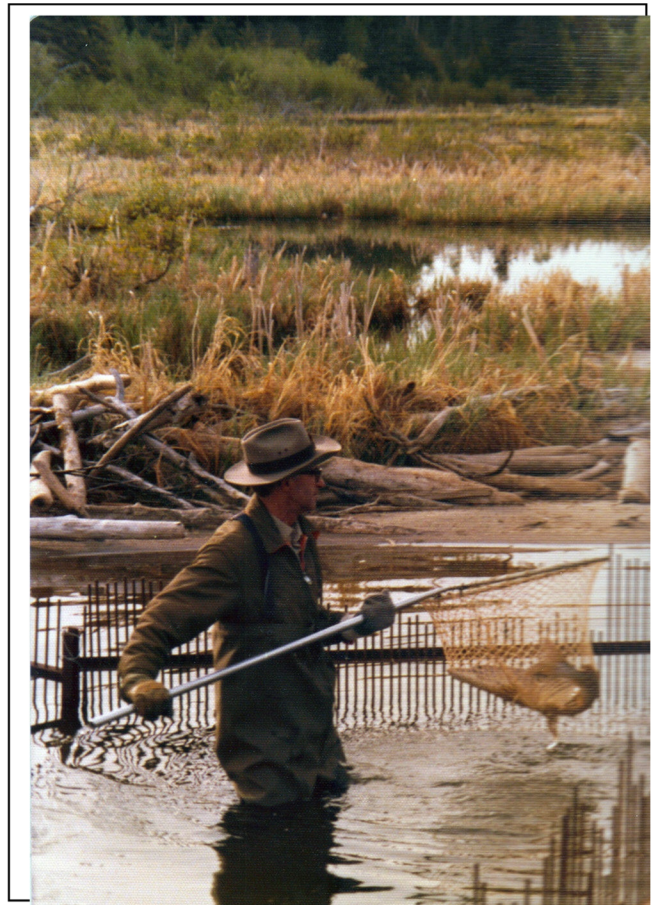
What Jack enjoyed most about his job as a warden was being outdoors. Easy-going in most respects, he was adamantly serious about protecting the natural world. One morning while on patrol during hunting season, he watched as two hunters on ski-dos chased a deer across the community pasture towards the national park. The buck leapt the paige-wire fence and dropped exhausted with the park boundary, almost at Jack's feet. To the disgruntled hunters Jack said, "He made it, boys. You might as well go home." On another occasion, while driving through a lightning storm along boundary Road, Jack wove his truck between scores of successive explosions of "ball lightning". He came out the experience exhilarated, claiming those flashes of St Elmo's fire were "as beautiful as the anti-aircraft fire the Italians threw at us over Salerno!" Once when asked about his religious belief, Jack claimed to be a "bush Baptist": nature, with all its beauty and cruelty, was to him the closest he ever came to a divine power.



Grace and Jack Dickinson, Sturgeon Crossing Warden Station, Prince Albert National Park circa 1966



Fish counts, weights, measures, tagging



Jack Dickinson fish trap: weighing,
measuring, tagging