

Frank Paul
(1924 – 2012)
Former NONC President and volunteer



Frank was born in Romania in 1924. When he was four years old, his parents immigrated to Canada leaving him in Romania with his grandparents. Once his parents were established in Kelowna they sent for young Frank who was six year old. With just a tag around his neck that included his name and destination – by himself – Frank crossed the Atlantic on a ship, entered Canada through Pier 21 in Halifax and travelled by train to Okanagan Landing where he was met by his father. Together they completed their journey to Kelowna on the SS Sicamous.

Frank grew up in Kelowna and obtained his BA in both English and Zoology from University of British Columbia in 1947. He met Mary, his future wife, when they were both pursuing their Masters' degree in Zoology, graduating with MA's in 1949. After one year of post-graduate work at the University of Washington, they returned to UBC where Frank took teacher's training.

After one year of teaching in Trail, Frank and Mary moved to Vernon in 1952 where he taught chemistry and biology at the high school for 13 years. Frank was involved in establishing a post-secondary Grade 13 program located at the Vernon Army Camp. About this time Okanagan College was being formed and Frank was asked to integrate Grade 13 into the college system and establish the Vernon Campus of Okanagan College. He retired at the end of 1980.

Frank was an avid naturalist and bird watcher. He was an early member of North Okanagan Naturalists' Club (NONC) which gave him a lifetime of enjoyment, friendships and outdoor adventures. He also served as president of The Federation of BC Naturalists (now called BC Nature), was editor of their newsletter and belonged to several committees, one of which included the Provincial Problem Wildlife Committee. He was elected as the BC representative for the Canadian Nature Federation and convened an Annual General Meeting of CNF at Silver Star Mountain. He was awarded Lifetime Memberships in both NONC and the Federation of BC Naturalists and also the Elton Anderson Award as the BC Naturalist of the Year.

Frank and Mary very generously opened their home to the hummingbird banding team from 2004 to 2011. They were the first site for the monitoring program in Vernon and their enthusiasm and hospitality were greatly appreciated by the team.

One of the significant contributions Frank made to our region and future generations is the creation of the Swan Lake Reserve. A review of NONC minutes reveals the number of meetings with provincial government officials, letters and petitions sent, and countless hours of volunteer time spent to achieve what was not a sure thing from the very beginning. Frank also enjoyed organizing Club events like summer camps, especially fly-in events and the canoe trip around the Bowron Lakes circuit.